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THE

SCHOOL FOR FRIENDS,

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED

WITH DISTINGUISHED SUCCESS

By their Majesties Servants,

AT THE

Theatre-Royal, Drury-Lane.

WRITTEN By Miss CHAMBERS,
Author of "He Deceives Himself,"—A Domestic Tale, in 3 Vols.

LONDON:
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY BARKER AND SON,
Dramatic Repository,
GREAT RUSSELL STREET COVENT GARDEN.

1806. [Price 2s. 6d.

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TO that generous Public, whoſe indulgent approbation of this, my firſt Dramatic attempt, has been to me my greateſt Pride, and my beſt Praiſe.

I beg permiſſion,

To Dedicate

The SCHOOL *for* FRIENDS,

And to Subſcribe myſelf,

The Public's moſt Obedient,

And Obliged,

MARIANNE CHAMBERS.

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YOUNG and unacquainted with that Knowledge of the Stage, which is only to be acquired by Experience, I cannot deny myſelf the Pleaſure of thus Publicly offering my ſincere Thanks to Mr. Wroughton, (as Acting Manager) and the Performers, for their very friendly ſolicitude ſhewn to me (a ſtranger) on this occaſion, highly ſenſible as I am how much this Comedy owes of its diſtinguiſhed ſucceſs to the exertion of thoſe Profeſſional Talents, which have ſo long adorned the Stage.

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PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY JAMES KENNEY, ESQ.

SPOKEN BY MRS. H. SIDDONS.

A FEMALE bard ſince counſel is decreed her,
To win your ſmiles, ſends me, a female pleader;
But ſince this pleading oft a profing trade is,
I've an enigma for the beaux and ladies;
What animal is that (its race muſt be,
From all reports as old as A. B. C.)
Of temper ſo preverted or diſeas'd,
Its greateſt pleaſure is to be diſpleas'd?
Moſt naturaliſts, tho' other notions paſs,
'Mongſt creatures venemous aſſign its claſs.
Fretful as porcupines, like them at will,
It vents its fatal vengeance in a quill.
Some who have well examin'd it have ſaid,
It has a ſerpent's heart and gooſe's head.
And tho' it may belong to both, or neither,
The noiſe it makes is very much like either.
Yet one hint more—thrice ſhudd'ring with affright,
Our bard of ſuch a being, dreamt laſt night.
Who'll give the anſwer? (*to the Pit*) Why that ſcowling face?
I won't ſweet Sirs,—I hope I've too much grace.
Nor think we dare inſinuate, that here,
We ever ſuch an animal can fear.
No; for our doom the voice we have to truſt,
Is ſtill acknowledg'd kind, indulgent, juſt.
The public voice—that voice whoſe warm applauſe,
Ne'er knew diſſention in a generous cauſe;—
That ſhouts fond homage to the patriot's worth,
And gives each great, each nobler virtue birth.
That voice that ſobb'd at NELSON'S hallow'd name,
When late his requiem fill'd the trump of fame;
That voice ſtill hails true genius in its dawn,
Nor ever chill'd it with the breath of Scorn.

Waking our author ſoon the truth confeſs'd,
And chas'd the phantom that diſturb'd her reſt;
Aſſured that voice will ever be the ſame,
Prompt in its praiſe, reluctant in its blame;
Pleas'd to be merciful, e'en more than juſt.
'Tis in herſelf alone is her diſtruſt.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

LORD BELMOUR	Mr. Elliston.
SIR FELIX MORDANT	Mr. Wroughton.
SIR EDWARD EPWORTH	Mr. Barrymore.
MR. HARDY	Mr. Dowton.
MATHEW DAW	Mr. Matthews.
JENKINS	Mr. Dormer.
Landlord	Mr. Maddocks.
LORD BELMOUR's *Servant*	Mr. Fisher.
Waiter	Mr. Purser.
Servants, &c.	

WOMEN.

LADY COURTLAND	Miſs Pope.
Mrs. HAMILTON	Mrs. Jordan.
Miſs EMILY	Mrs. H. Siddons.
LUCY	Miſs Mellon.
SARAH	Miſs Tidswell.

SCENE.—*A Watering Place.*

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THE

SCHOOL FOR FRIENDS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Inside of a Lodging-House.*

Enter JENKINS *and* LUCY.

Jen. WHAT ſignifies telling me a Canterbury ſtory, what's your miſtreſs' misfortunes to me.—If all my Lodgers was to pay their rent in this coin—I ſhould have my houſe full of trouble, and my pockets full of emptineſs. If fine ladies will come down from London to theſe here watering places, and take fine lodgings—they muſt pay for them—that's what I ſay.

Lucy. Fine lodgings!—do you call theſe fine lodgings indeed!—three rooms on a ſecond floor, they might ſerve for ſome of the vulgar people, who are not uſed to no better accommodation—but for people who have always lived at the weſt end of the town, as I and my lady have, with a dozen ſervants at our command.

Jen. Come, Miſtreſs, a little leſs pride, and a little more honeſty—as to your coming from the weſt end of the town, as you make ſuch a brag about—why ſo much the worſe—there is a great many of the gentry who come down here from that quarter whoſe characters won't bear enquiry; and you and your miſtreſs may be of the ſame kidney for what I can tell.

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Lucy. You are a low vulgar feller, without hedication and I ſcorns your words. I ſees you have not been us'd to people above your own condition.

Jen. What do you mean by that—you and your miſtreſs have been in my houſe theſe two months, and not a farthing of her money have I ſeen—but when I aſk for my rent, you tell me I muſt wait for it—for your lady came from the weſt end of the town—I ſhall ſpeak to her myſelf.

Lucy. You would not be ſuch a brute, as to go for to frighten a lady, who has never been uſed to no ſuch low-life doings as paying of rent—ſhe was born to a higher condition—ſhe never know'd what it was to pay for nothing.

Jen. Why that is the way to arrive at a *high* condition not to pay for nothing (*going towards the door of an inner apartment*) I ſhall ſee to that tho'.

Lucy. Dear, dear, if he goes to talk about his money, it will ſet my poor lady all over in ſuch a tremblation.

Enter MATTHEW DAW.

(*He looks at them in ſilence—comes forwards.*)

Daw. I thought I heard the voice of one that was high in anger.

Jen. And ſuppoſe you did, Mr. Daw, what then? I hope a man may be in a paſſion in his own houſe, without aſking leave of his lodgers—let every man mind his own buſineſs, that is my argument.

Daw. Friend Jenkins, I would rather be *ſuſpected* of impertinence, than *convicted* of neglect—and to liſten unmoved to the wrathful words of perſons in debate, without trying to appeaſe them, is not the duty of a chriſtian.

Jen. Why, as to that, maſter Daw—you have lodged in my houſe ſome time, and I reſpects you, becauſe you always *pays*, but as to your preaching

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why that's quite another thing with me, you may lead all the ſtray'd ſheep in the village and welcome, ſo that I am not one of the flock.

Daw. Thou art a man, friend Jenkins, entirely of this world, one that plods on, neither turning to the right nor to the left, leſt, peradventure, thou ſhould'ſt miſs the road where intereſt is leading thee; thou eateſt and drinkeſt of the good things of this world, and careſt not for him that is hungry.

Jen. What do you mean by that? I am as mindful of my duty as my neighbours, I works hard for my money—owes nobody nothing—neither borrows nor lends, and that is what I call living like a chriſtian.

Lucy. Ay, and here is my poor lady in trouble enough, and yet he ain't content to wait a little longer for his rent.

Daw. Why are theſe unfriendly paſſions raiſed againſt the unfortunate—haſt thou no compaſſion?

Jen. Compaſſion! What have I to do with compaſſion? What has it done for you? Why if it had not been for your *compaſſion*, you might have lived like any gentleman, and kept a warm houſe over your head, and not have been running about in a thread-bare coat, looking like a pauper.

Daw. Perchance, friend, compaſſion hath purchaſed a ſenſation for me, thy heart was never acquainted with; it ſprings within the human breaſt, when we relieve the diſtreſſes of a fellow-creature.

Jen. May be ſo, but that's what I knows nothing about.

Lucy. Mr. Matthew, you are a pious man, if Mr. Jenkins would but wait till to-morrow.

Jen. Why the woman is almoſt a ſtranger to me.

Daw. Look ye, friend Jenkins, the world is a large manſion, the people of one family—for HE that governs it, is the father of us all, who *is* the ſtranger then?

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Jen. If I was ſure of not being again diſappointed.—

Lucy. I hear my lady coming this way.

Jen. Well, well—this once, but mind if to-morrow—

Lucy. Now do go along, there's a good man.

Jen. Ay, ay, I'm a good man now. [*Exit.*

Matthew Daw loiters behind.

Enter Mrs. HAMILTON.

(*Matthew looks at her with reverence as he goes out.*)

Mrs. Ham. What voices were thoſe I heard ſo loud?—who has been with you, Lucy?

Lucy. Only Mr. Jenkins, ma'am—

Mrs. Ham. I thought I bade you tell me when he came again—for tho' it would inconvenience me exceedingly to ſettle with him, until I receive letters from London, yet he muſt not be kept in ſuſpence; I am a ſtranger here.

Lucy. Dear ma'am, I ſhouldn't have thought of ſuch a man as that being afraid of your ladyſhip—I told him as much—ſays I, my lady is a perſon of conſequence, tho' ſhe deigns to put up with ſuch poor apartments; It is not, ſays I, that ſhe is *obligated* to appear in this humble condition.

Mrs. Ham. Why did you tell him this? have I not repeatedly cautioned you againſt any hints, that may lead to a diſcovery of *who I am*, have I not uſed every means to to conceal my real ſituation.

Lucy. Yes ma'am, and what's the good comes of it, why nobody pays you any reſpect; for my part, I don't think there is much encouragement in this world for humbleneſs, ſo I am always for making myſelf of as much conſequence as I can; there's a poor Quaker-man, whoſe name is Daw, the only civil creature in the houſe, for he ſays if he can be of any ſervice to your ladyſhip—

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Mrs. Ham. How ſhould he know I am in want of aſſiſtance; why do you talk of my concerns to a ſtranger? If you are diſſatisfied with the change of life that my misfortunes have reduced me to, don't ſcruple to tell me ſo.

Lucy. O dear, O dear, how have I behaved to deſerve this unkindneſs—did not I live with you in my good old maſter's (your father's) life-time? When your ladyſhip's goodneſs and beauty was the pride of all the country round; didn't I ſee you married to one of the firſt gentlemen, and when your ſweet baby was born, didn't you promiſe that I ſhould always remain in your ſervice, and ſo to be ſure I have, and ſeen a diſmal change; who could have thought that my maſter would have turn'd out ſo ſadly.

Mrs. Ham. If you think my regard of any conſequence, breathe not one ſyllable againſt your maſter.

Lucy. Why now ma'am, if he was my huſband I'd ſoon ſhew him the difference—but you was always ſo meek and ſo mild; never upbraiding him, but coming down here in diſguiſement, for fear of expoſing his wickedneſs to the world; and now you want to turn me away in the midſt of your affliction, but, if you pleaſe, ma'am, I won't go—for whilſt ſuch a lady as you can put up with a pitiful place like this, your ſervant has no right to complain.

Mrs. Ham. Well, well, I meant not to ſpeak unkindly to you—I am not leſs ſenſible of your fidelity than I uſed to be, but misfortune has made me more petulant.—*(a knocking is heard without,—* Who can that be?

Lucy. I'll ſee, ma'am. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Ham. Why flow theſe tears? Where is my fortitude, that a repetition of paſt ſcenes, has power to awaken this tenderneſs! Why remember a huſband's vows of love and conſtancy? has he not broke

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them all? left and abandoned me? my child too? could not thy innocent ſmiles, my boy, have pleaded for a father's love? nature's language ſpeaks with eloquence in nature's cauſe—but midſt the tumult of uncheck'd, deſires what voice is heard? what claim allowed? what tie held ſacred? or what faith revered.

Enter LUCY,

Lucy. Here is a letter for your Ladyſhip, directed for Mrs. Hamilton—ah! when your ladyſhip married you little thought of changing your name.

Mrs. Ham. It comes from London—*(looks at the Signature)*—from my huſband's agent there—now, now, at laſt, my fears of poverty for thee, my boy are ſilenced.—*(reads with emotion)*—"We receiv-"ed your ladyſhip's application for your quarterly "ſum of eighty pounds, with ſome ſurprize, it hav-"ing been paid a few days paſt to a perſon "authorized by your huſband."

[*Lets the letter drop without ſpeaking.*

Lucy. Well to be ſure, here's a trick! Sure your ladyſhip won't bear ſuch uſage—I'd go to a conſtable, ma'am, or a lord-mayor, or one of the biſhops, or ſome ſuch perſon, but what I'd have juſtice.

Mrs. Ham. I can bear it, Lucy, I can bear it all, for the ſake of my poor boy—I will encounter any ſorrow—I will be patient! not a ſigh, not a tear, but oh, if I am ſilent, I am not inſenſible—*(with great caution)*—I have affections, paſſions—

Lucy. Come now, ma'am.

Mrs. Ham. My poor boy—who now ſhall guard thy tender age, or guide thy riper years? where ſhall thou hope to find a friend, if a parent can abandon thee? ungrateful man, to take advantage of my tenderneſs—why do I rail—ſomething muſt be thought of for the future—Lucy follow me.

[*Exeunt.*

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SCENE—*An Elegant Apartment in the Houſe of Lady Courtland.*

SIR EDWARD EPWORTH *and* Lady COURTLAND, *diſcovered at cheſs*—Miſs EMILY *watching them.*

Lady Court. One more lucky move, Sir Edward, and your chance of the game is at leaſt equal to mine.

Sir Edw. Ay, madam, but I have been playing my part in it lately ſo ill, that it is now time to reflect a little.

Lady Court. Pooh!—you are ſo grave, I never knew your *prudent* people *fortunate ones*—they take as much time in thinking how they ſhall act, as eſtabliſhes the ſucceſs of a leſs cautious adventurer. Come, courage my dear Sir Edward—when *I* challenge you.—(*in a languiſhing manner*)

Emily. Ay, *courage* my dear Sir Edward, *when my grandmama challenges you.*

Sir Edw. What was that, Miſs Emily?

Emily. Sir, I only ſaid I was ſure no young man of faſhion could refuſe to play with my *grandmother.*

Lady Court. Grandmother! how dare you make uſe of ſo horrid an expreſſion.

Emily. How dear ma'am, what am I to call you? for as you was my father's mother you muſt be my grandmama—Now am I not right, Sir Edward?

Lady Court. Provoking ſtupidity—have I not repeatedly told you, ſuch fooliſh *diſtinctions* are now baniſh'd all civilized ſociety—no one is able to diſcover, in the preſent improved ſtate of things, who are *fathers, huſbands, wives*, or *children*, at leaſt not by their *conduct towards one another*—but you are as literal in your ideas as a baby.

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Emily. Dear ma'am, how can I help that, what ſhould *I* know about *civilized* ſociety—when I have never been uſed to converſe with any one except your ladyſhip.

Sir Edw. Well ſaid, ſimplicity.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, my Lord Belmour deſires his compliments.

Sir Edw. Lord Belmour!—where is he?

Serv. Juſt arrived at the Roſe, ſir; he called me in as I was paſſing the door of the inn, and enquired for your lodgings—I told my lord your honour was living with Lady Courtland—Upon which he deſired his compliments, and that he would be with you preſently.

Sir Edw. I ſhall be happy to receive him—a very particular friend, Madam; have I your ladyſhip's permiſſion.

Lady Court. Sir, the ceremony is all your own. One word, Mr. Thomas—how dare you take the liberty of uſing my name ſo freely?—I deſire for the future you will not ſay your maſter is *living with Lady Courtland*, but that Sir Edward *is on a viſit at the Abbey.*

Serv. I humbly beg your ladyſhip's pardon—I had entirely forgot *being* in the ſame houſe was not living with your ladyſhip. [*Exit.*

Emily. For my part I think Mr. Thomas was quite right in what he ſaid—for didn't you bring Sir Edward from Bath, you did not find him *here?*

Lady Court. I bring Sir Edward?

Emily. Nay now, *grandma*, I'm ſure he did not *bring* you.

Lady Court. Did you expect your friend, Lord Belmour, ſir, to viſit you in this part of the country?

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Sir Edw. No, madam, ſo far from it, his laſt letter, informed me of his having buſineſs that would detain him in town for ſix months at leaſt, ſo your ladyſhip may judge of the ſteadineſs of his nature.

Emily. Buſineſs! Pray ſir, is my Lord Belmour a merchant then?

Sir Edw. Yes, in the way of pleaſure, few men deal more largely.

Lady Court. I hope he has a capital to ſupport his credit.

Sir Edw. Why, Madam, he is not ſo *rich*, that more would become ſuperfluous, nor ſo *poor*, that leſs would deprive him of a ſufficiency; his lordſhip is no common trader, his principal riches are ſuch as render him moſt valuable to thoſe who know his heart.

Emily. And pray, ſir, in all this gentleman's dealings, has he nothing to do with love?

Sir Edw. A perfect monopolizer, he ſpeculates on every beauty he ſees.

Lady Court. Such an enterprizing ſpirit deſerves to meet with encouragement.

Sir Edw. Aye, madam, but like moſt other traders upon this principle, I am afraid his loſſes have doubled his gains.

Lady Court. What, is the poor gentleman *married?*

Sir Edw. No, not quite ſo bad neither—though he is ready to run away with every lady he meets.

Lady Court. I beg, sir, you will give him a free invitation here.

Emily. Oh! delightful!—but pray! ſir, *(taking him on one ſide)* which does your friend like beſt —*old* women or *young?*

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Lord Belmour, ſir! [*Exit.*

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Enter Lord BELMOUR.

Sir Edw. (*Embracing him*) Welcome, dear Charles!—this is a pleasure great as unexpected.

Lord Bel. Thank you, thank you.

Sir Edw. Lady Coutland—my friend, Lord Belmour, madam.

Lady Court. Sir, you do me honour. (*Lord B. bows.*)

Sir Edw. Miss Emily, my lord.

Lord Bel. I am happy in being introduc'd to so charming a young lady.

Lady Court. I presume your lordship has just left London?

Lord Bel. About a fortnight ago, madam.

Sir Edw. And been all that time coming hither?

Lord Bel. Not I, faith, I don't admire such tortoise-like travelling—I generally drive as most of us live Ned, faster than *my own* horses can carry me.

Sir Edw. My lord, madam, has brought his usual flow of spirits with him.

Lady Court. I hope, sir, he never travels without them; his lordship seems to manage them so agreeably.

Lord Bel. I endeavour, madam, to make them my servants, rather than my companions——power, is a dangerous weapon in the hands of the unruly, and if I did not sometimes call upon discretion to restrain them, they would soon govern *me*.

Sir Edw. My friend is a skilful architect, madam, he can build his happiness on any ground.

Lord Bel Not so, Ned, I could never build it on the ruin of another's.—Nature did not put the materials for happiness into our hands, to raise so mischievous a structure.

Lady Court. (*Looking uneasy*) Did your lordship leave the town pretty full of company?

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Lord Bel. As uſual, madam, more people in it than could find either buſineſs or pleaſure—a mere maſquerade, where every one is anxious to play a part, but very few able to ſupport a character.

Lady Court. The ſame dull ſcene, over and over again, my lord, nothing new, but now and then a change of actors.

Lord Bel. Oh! madam! I cannot think ſo, there are ſome characters brought forward at the preſent period, which we never before thought of ſupporting, prejudice, that ſtood guard to keep out criminals, is now making way for modern candour, who is employed in uſhering in the new group.

Lady Court. Happy period!

Lord Bel. Yes, madam, *very*; for now we have mothers abandoning their offſpring—plenty of huſbands neglecting their wives—modern friends, mortal enemies—virtuous females no longer modeſt—old men running away with girls of ſixteen—and young fellows marrying their grandmothers

Sir Edw. (*aſide*) Now is he at his old tricks—I thought her ladyſhip would not eſcape him.

Lady Court. Your lordſhip will excuſe my abſence for a ſhort time—I leave you, ſir, with your friend; who I hope will ſecure you as our viſitor whilſt you can find pleaſure in this part of the country—come, Miſs Emily.

[*Exeunt Lady* COURTLAND *and Miſs* EMILY.

Lord Bel. Your ladyſhip does me too much honor, (*watching her 'till out of ſight, then turning to Sir Edw.*) come, Ned, why don't you do as the old lady deſir'd you—*teach me to feel myſelf at home here*—I ſee ſhe has *taught* you.

Sir Edw. Will you never be ſerious?—tell me now, what has brought you thus ſuddenly to this place?—ſtarted ſome freſh game, eh, Charles?

Lord Bel. Faith, you are right—I am in full chace of what all the town are hunting to the devil.

Sir Edw. A deſperate purſuit indeed!

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Lord Bel. I will tell thee what I am in chace of (*in his ear*)—*a friend's honor.* Dos't think I ſhall recover it?

Sir Edw. (*Starts, laughing affectedly*)—Travel ſo many miles in purſuit of a friend's honor?

Lord Bel. Why not? I would *travel* from this place to the *poles*, back again to the *equator*—and feel the ſame motive no diſgrace that urg'd me to this undertaking.

Sir. Edw. And pray, my lord, how long has your friend's honor been miſſing?

Lord Bel. Ever ſince he took up the dice box, Ned, and rattled away his eſtate among ſharpers.

Sir Edw. Are you ſure your friend's conduct has been rightly interpreted?

Lord Bel. His ſudden departure from town, and his conduct preceding it, have given his friends an opportunity of tranſlating it into this language.

Sir Edw. The conduct of mankind, Charles, is a *volume* open to the world's inſpection, which without underſtanding, *all* think themſelves qualified to *read*, and malice or prejudice ſo often take up the work, that it is ſeldom juſtly interpreted.

Lord Bel. Give me your hand, Ned; there is an air of levity in my manners, which the world is very apt to miſtake for a careleſs diſregard to the concerns of thoſe I moſt value—but you muſt know my heart better—for I could not hear that my friend was under embarraſſments, without coming poſt after him—and now behold me, arrived with a hand and heart, ready to do you all the ſervice in my power.

Sir Edw. (*with emotion*) Sir, I don't underſtand you.

Lord Bel. Come, come, this affected ignorance is not well tim'd; have *you* or have you *not*, loſt more than half your fortune at play?

Sir Edw. What, if I have loſt the *whole of it*, the men who won it of me, dare not aſperſe my honor.

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Lord Bel. O, no, you loſt it in as *honourable* a manner as moſt men of *honor* win—trying to raiſe their fortunes on the ruin of an adverſary—but, what the devil, could you find no other balm for your wounds, than what this *old* dowager can adminiſter.

Sir Edw. This is not friendly.

Lord Bel. Perhaps, Ned, her ladyſhip adminiſters a quieting draught to your conſcience—lulls it to ſleep with gilded pills—how does ſhe entertain you? couldn't you juſt give me a hint?

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, my Lord Belmour's gentleman is without, and begs to ſpeak with his maſter.

Lord Bel. Bid him wait—I ſhall return to the inn preſently.

Serv. If it would pleaſe your lordſhip to ſee him now, he has *ſomething* of importance, (as he ſays,) to communicate.

Sir. Edw. Let him come in by all means.

[*Exit Servant.*

Lord Bel. What hiſtory has he to relate now?—the fellow is a proper traveller—he is always meeting with ſome improbable adventure.

Enter Lord Belmour's Servant.

Serv. Good, my lord, I have found her.

Lord Bel. Found—found what?—the greyhound I miſs'd after I left town?

Serv. No, my lord, *the lady you miſs'd before you left town.*

Lord Bel. What, not my charming incomprehenſible, my beautiful obſcure?

Serv. Yes, my lord, the ſame.

Lord Bel. Impoſſible—ſwear it, you dog.

Serv. What, ſwear that it is impoſſible, my lord?

Lord Bel. But the *when*, the *where*, the *how*?

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Serv. Why, my lord, as I was going round——

Lord Bel. O damn your *round-abouts*, croſs over and come to the point at once.

Serv. Why then, my lord—on the honor of a *gentleman's* gentleman, I have diſcover'd her abode.

Lord Bel. Give me joy, Ned, give me joy—"Love "lent me council, and I lent him eyes—were ſhe as "far as that vaſt ſhore, waſh'd by the fartheſt ſea, "I would adventure for ſuch merchandize."—I am the happieſt man in chriſtendom—ſuch a creature—a divinity—I'll introduce you.

Serv. I beg pardon, my Lord, but hadn't your lordſhip better take an opportunity of firſt introducing *yourſelf*.

Lord Bel. Right!—I will ſend for you, Ned, in the mean time the dowager ſhall ſolace you—my compliments to the dowager.

Sir Edw. You will dine with us, my lord?

Lord Bel. Dine with you, yes, yes; but firſt viſit my charmer—my compliments to the dowager!—*don't not* envy me, you rogue?—my compliments to the dowager. [*Exit with Servant.*

Sir Edw. (*laughing*) Poor Belmour—he came down in purſuit of a *friend's honor*——and it is well if he don't return without *his own*.

[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE.—*A Room at Jenkins's.*

Mrs. HAMILTON, *diſcovered ſitting in a muſing poſture, after a pauſe, riſes and comes forward.*

Mrs. Ham. HOW unſteady are our beſt reſolutions, when oppos'd by inclination—demand legal reſtitution for the wrongs I have receiv'd—and ſtand for-

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ward the accuſer of my huſband, never, never!—Nature will plead for us in a language more irreſiſtible—ſhe will appeal to his heart, and when in cool and unimpaſſion'd intervals he reverts to the paſt, grief and regret *muſt* follow his reflections.

Enter Lucy *(out of breath.)*

Lucy. O ma'am didn't you think I ſhould never get back again—ſuch a piece of unluckineſs.

Mrs. Ham. What now has happened?

Lucy. I'll tell you ma'am—but if you pleaſe I'm quite out of breath—who could have thought of his finding us out in ſuch a place as this.

Mrs. Ham. Who has found us out? what are you talking of—explain yourſelf.

Lucy. Why ma'am as I was returning from the jewellers, juſt by the Roſe-Inn, who ſhould I come plump againſt but the ſaucy footman, belonging to the ſtrange gentleman, that beſet your ladyſhip ſo before you left town.

Mrs. Ham. Is it poſſible—he did not ſee you, I hope.

Lucy. Why my lady, I was ſo frighten'd for fear he ſhould—that I gave a ſort of a ſcream.

Mrs. Ham. Which diſcover'd you to him.

Lucy. Yes, ma'am, but I couldn't very well help it, ſo then he began his old trade of lying, ſwearing his maſter had loſt his ſenſes on your ladyſhip's ſudden departure from town.

Mrs. Ham. Here, I was in hopes at leaſt to have been ſafe—Lucy as you value my favour, give no encouragement to this ſtranger—avoid all communication with him.

Lucy. Why madam, when did I do otherwiſe? I am ſure when he us'd to follow me to aſk impertinent queſtions, he never was a bit the wiſer for any thing I anſwer'd him.

Mrs. Ham. Indeed I believe not.

Lucy. Where do you live, ſays he—at home, ſays I,

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you want to be at your old tricks, miſter, do you, ſays I, watching when my lady goes out—peeping and prying for your worthy maſter—but perhaps my lady never goes out, perhaps there is no lodging-houſe oppoſite ours, that will accommodate ſpies, perhaps my lady is not here, ſays I,—nor her *ſervant* neither, ſays he.

Mrs. Ham. You ſhould not have talk'd to him thus.

Lucy. Ma'am I was ſo afraid that he would find out where we liv'd.

Mrs. Ham. And if he does—but tell me Lucy, what about the jeweller?

Lucy. Ma'am when I ſhow'd him the trinkets—he ſaid, it might be ſo long before he could diſpoſe of them, that he could not make it worth his while to become a purchaſer, and here they are. (*giving her a ſmall caſe.*)

Mrs. Ham. What is to be done?—I have no other means to raiſe a preſent ſupply,

Lucy. Yes, there's my maſter's picture ſet round with diamonds.

Mrs. Ham. I have told you nothing but the laſt extremity ſhall urge me to part with it.

Lucy. And what is this but the laſt extremity, has he not refus'd your ladyſhip your lawful claim.

Mrs. Ham. No, I will not believe my huſband capable of ſo great an unkindneſs—he couldn't ſee the meaneſt of his fellow-creatures wanting the neceſſaries of life, without holding his hand open to ſupply them—would ſuch a one refuſe his wife and child a claim that he allow'd to every other perſon? O, no, I know his nature better.

Lucy. Then, ma'am, how came it that he receiv'd your ladyſhip's allowance, without even letting you know that he had done ſo, when it was all your ladyſhip had to depend on.

Mrs. Ham. On my life there is ſome miſtake—which the moment he diſcovers he will rectify.

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Lucy. In the mean time, let me ſpeak to Mr. Daw, he underſtands the value of theſe ſort of things, he is a very honeſt man, he extorts every one to be ſo, but perhaps your ladyſhip won't like him becauſe he is a quaker.

Mrs. Ham. Indeed you wrong me, if his *meaning* is good it would be hard indeed to make his *religion* an objection. I will ſpeak to him myſelf, I am going to my cloſet, ſend him to me Lucy.

Lucy. I will ma'am.—(*Exit ſeverally at oppoſite doors.*)

SCENE.—*Changes to an inner apartment.*

Enter LORD BELMOUR (*from another door.*)

Lord Bel. So, not a ſoul here, neither, I have been racking my brains to find an excuſe for my viſit, and not a creature can I ſee to repeat it to.—Another door open, 'gad I will ſee where it leads—the event only can determine the ſucceſs of the *wiſeſt expedition.* [*Exit.*

Enter Mrs. HAMILTON, (*looking over a ſmall caſket of jewels*—Lord BELMOUR *appears at a door in the flat.*)

Lord Bel.—(*aſide*) Ah! what do I ſee—yes, 'tis her by all my hopes of happineſs (*is coming forward, ſtops on hearing her ſpeak.*)

Mrs. Ham. (*taking up a bracelet.*)—Theſe jewels once I thought of little value, and now I am weak enough to weep over the fooliſh toys—*thus* we know not how to eſtimate the value of greater bleſſings, 'till we feel the neceſſity of parting with them.

Lord Bel. (*coming forward.*) And if happineſs is ſo ſeldom within our reach, who would heſitate to accept her when ſhe offers herſelf.

Mrs. Ham. (*ſtarts*) Ah! who is this?

Lord Bel. Dear madam, if I have alarmed you;

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Mrs. Ham. Alarm'd me, ſir!

Lord Bel. You are terrified madam.

Mrs. Ham. (*looking at her jewels*) *terrified, ſir!*

Lord Bel. Heaven's madam, you cannot ſuſpect.

Mrs. Ham. What am I to think ſir, when a gentleman breaks in upon my retirement ſo uneeremoniouſly—ſo—ſtrangely, ſo—ſo—

Lord Bel. Impertinently, you would add, madam—but hear me,—a bill in the window gave ſignal for lodgings to let within, the door ſtood invitingly open, I enter'd and in ſearching for the landlord, diſcovered the retreat of one of the moſt beautiful woman in England—I hope, madam, you left all your family well in London.

Mrs. Ham. Sir?

Lord Bel. Your friends here, madam, I mean, I hope you found them in perfect health—your little boy, is he quite recover'd?

Mrs. Ham. Sir, this conduct carries with it too much the air of an inſult, and you will pardon me, if I treat it as ſuch (*going towards the door.*)

Lord Bel. Nay, madam, hear me, I came to this place by *accident*—I enter'd this houſe by *accident*—I found *you* in it by *accident*, and if I have done wrong by *accident*, don't give me the puniſhment that is due to a premeditating offender.

Mrs. Ham. Sir, this language from a ſtranger—

Lord Bel. There ſhould be no ſtrangers in the *world*, *madam*, if I had the government of it, we all ſhould be united and but one intereſt among us—I had the pleaſure to ſee you in London, is it ſo extraordinary that one fellow-creature ſhould be intereſted in the concerns of another? I would rather look upon the human heart in a more favourable point of view—come, madam, break thro' this prejudice that fences in the better part of our nature, meet me on the broad way of confidence, as a fellow-traveller; thro' the ſame road, allow me to call myſelf your friend.

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Mrs. Ham. This, ſir, is the language of the moraliſt—a language that no man who does not follow his precepts has a title to uſe.

Lord Bel. Nay, madam, 'till my *actions* become a ſatire on my *words*, it will not offend virtue, to think favourably of them.

Mrs. Ham. Heaven forbid that I ſhould cheriſh an opinion unworthy of theſe ſentiments—yet—

Lord Bel. Nay, madam, no yets I beſeech you.

Mrs. Ham. If theſe doubts wrong you, Sir, charge them to the account of that which inſpired them—aſk if ſincerity is the diſtinguiſhing feature of the age in which we live? Aſk if the language of truth is never utter'd, but by thoſe who follow her dictates? If honor is never made the pledge of infamy? If vice always appears in her natural deformity? O no! for now ſhe comes habited ſo like virtue, that under the ſpecious name of friendſhip, the worthieſt hearts have been wickedly betray'd.

Lord Bel. I won't contend about the honeſty of other men's hearts, but in the preſent inſtance, permit me to anſwer for my own.

Mrs. Ham. Then leave me Sir, leave me—if you are what I could wiſh to *think* you are, this requeſt will not appear ungrateful; if you are otherwiſe I ſhall have leſs reaſon to regret its propriety.

Enter LUCY *followed by* MATTHEW DAW.

Lucy. Here is Mr. Daw, Ma'am, come to look at the jewels you with'd to diſpoſe of. [*Mrs. Hamilton appears confuſed.*

Lord Bel (*aſide*) *Part with her jewels, this looks like diſtreſs.*) Pray ma'am uſe no ceremony with me.

Daw. Thy hand-maid hath informed me, friend, of thy wiſhes concerning ſome worldly baubles called jewels.

Mrs. Ham. Another time, if you pleaſe Sir.

Lord Bel. Allow me, madam, I am the beſt judge of diamonds in the world (*taking up a ring*)

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This ring now, what do you think, Sir, of *this ring*.

Daw. It ſhineth with exceeding luſtre—but the fooliſh brightneſs of theſe toys, like the light of falſe philoſophy, is more dazzling than uſeful.

Lord Bel. Pray Sir, what is your profeſſion?

Daw. I am called a watch-maker by trade.

Lord Bel. And does philoſophy regulate your watches as well as your opinions?

Daw. Thou art pleaſed to jeſt with me; my opinions relate not to learning, but in my humble occupation I make my work a book, and find in it much matter for argument.

Lord Bel. Aye indeed, and what my good friend is the leſſon you read.

Daw That the different degrees of men's condition, which are ſo apt to raiſe doubts in our minds, concerning the juſtice by which we are govern'd, is nothing more than this—a watch taken to pieces by one unacquainted with the art, who ſees a number of ſmall parts which appear to him, to bear no proportion to each other—till beholding the mechanic apply them to their different uſes, he views, with delighted wonder, the fitneſs of their order, and whilſt he acknowledges the aſtoniſhing wiſdom of the artiſt, bluſhes that he ever doubted.

Lord Bel. By which you would imply, that your *watch* is the world—your ſtranger, man, and your artiſt,—(*pauſe, looking up with devotion*) give me your hand Sir, if I ſpoke with too little caution accept this as an apology—this honeſt gentleman has given me ſuch a favourable idea of his trade that I have a great inclination to try my ſucceſs in it—Come, madam, won't you encourage ſo laudable a reſolution—allow me to begin upon theſe (*taking out his pocket-book*) I have a bill here.—

Daw. (*looking over his ſhoulder*) Two hundred pounds, verily theſe trinkets are not worth one twentieth part of that ſum,

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Lord Bel. Pooh, pooh! I ſee you know nothing of the matter—(*offering the note to Mrs. Hamilton*)

Mrs. Ham. For the honor of humanity Sir, I will *think* you offer this in kindneſs.

Lord Bel. Nay now indeed I muſt have them; come, dear madam, take this fooliſh note—I ſhall never diſpoſe of it again to ſo much advantage—you don't know what miſchief your refuſal may create—It may go to purchaſe a poor man's honeſty or a rich man's diſgrace, for we are all honeſt enough, as long as we thrive upon it, but if the devil himſelf was to offer better terms—faith I'm afraid we ſhould change our party.

Mrs. Ham. Indeed you are miſtaken, *my* ſituation does not require the aſſiſtance of a ſtranger—I am by no means deſtitute, as you ſeem to think me, I have connexions, *very tender connexions*—friend very—one very, *very dear friend*—Sir, *you* have affected—pain'd me—(*burſting into tears*)

Lord Bel. By heaven my words were traitors to my meaning, if in utterance they carried with them leſs than honor and reſpect; theſe ſcruples I muſt think are the effect of a too refin'd delicacy—nay, madam, be not alarm'd, this inſtant I am gone—for modeſty is ſo beautiful in *my* eyes, that let her appear in what form ſhe will, I muſt reverence her.

[*Exit* Lord BELMOUR.

Mrs. Ham. (*after a pauſe*) Lucy, how came this gentleman to gain ſuch free admittance here?

Lucy. Why, my lady, that is juſt the queſtion I was going to aſk your ladyſhip—his ſaucy footman watch'd me home, no doubt, but how he introduced his maſter, is paſt my art to gueſs.

Mrs. Ham. Make my excuſes to this good man—I will ſpeak to him hereafter. (*Exit.*

Daw. Young woman, thy miſtreſs ſeemeth much grieved in her mind.

Lucy. Why you muſt know, Mr. Daw, the ſtranger who has juſt left us happen'd to live oppoſite to my lady in town, and being ſtruck with

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her beauty (tho' he ſaw *me* every day at the window) my lady could never ſtir out that he did not follow her! when my young maſter was ſick, he ſent every day to aſk after him—offer'd his chariot for our uſe—in ſhort there was no getting rid of him 'till my lady growing uneaſy, reſolv'd to leave town, and the waters of this place being recommended for her child, we came hither, but even here, worſe luck, he has found us out—to be ſure he don't ſeem to mean any harm.

Daw. But, as long as what thee calleſt gentlemen refuſe their wives the protection of huſbands—other men won't want an excuſe for offering them theirs.

Lucy. (*looking on the table.*) What's this! Why as ſure as I am alive my lord has left the note he offer'd my miſtreſs for the jewels; (*going to the door of the inward apartment*) My lady, ma'am.

Mrs. Ham. (*comes forward*) Who is it calls?

Lucy. If you pleaſe ma'am, my lord has left this note upon the table—a draft for two hundred pound, ma'am.

Mrs. Ham. No, I hope not.

Lucy. See, my lady, here it is—what is to be done, ma'am? we don't know where he lives.

Mrs. Ham. A perſon of *his* conſequence cannot long remain unknown in ſuch a place as this.

Daw. Perchance thy friend may call again.

Mrs. Ham. Which of all things moſt I wiſh prevented.

Daw. If he tarrieth here, I will ſeek him out, and reſtore itto him, ſhould thy pleaſure *will it* ſo.

Mrs. Ham. I thank you, *but*—

Daw. Thou heſitateſt to truſt a poor man with what thou thinkeſt, too great a temptation for his honeſty, thou needeſt not fear; I am too rich to covet what is another's, I have *weighed my* wants in nature's ſcale, and found *her* gifts a balance to my wiſhes.

Mrs. Ham. Go ſir, you have my confidence—reſtore my lord his wealth, and if he will liſten to

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you, inſtruct him how to uſe it—not as a bribe to betray the unhappy into vice—but as the reward of induſtry and virtue.

Daw. I will tell him, that it is only lent to him in truſt for his fellow-creatures, and as he diſpoſes of it *now*, ſo he muſt account for it *hereafter*.

[*Exit ſeverally.*

SCENE—*A room at lady Courtland's.*

SIR EDWARD *and* LORD BELMOUR.

Sir Edw. So much for your fair *incomprehenſible*, your *beautiful* obſcure, ah! ah! ah!—

Lord Bel. Nay, hear me—elated with the thoughts of having found her ſo unexpectedly—I enter'd her lodgings full of love and delight, but the air of modeſt dignity with which ſhe check'd my advances, ſilenc'd every thought but of reſpect for her.

Sir Edw. (*laughing*) You who have had ſo long acquaintance with the female heart, to be impos'd on by a few tears.

Lord Bel. If ſhe is not a woman of virtue, ſhe has the art of the devil.

Sir Edw. A woman of virtue, the very circumſtance of parting with her jewels, confirms her ſituation.—A caſt miſtreſs, my life for it, ſetting up on the credit of a borrow'd reputation 'till by her arts ſhe induces ſome fool to marry her, or a runaway wife, perhaps, paying the price of her infidelity.—Come, come, leave this fooliſh woman to the obſcurity in which you found her, here is Lady Courtland's grand-daughter with beauty and ſimplicity, to charm the heart of any man, her fortune is by no means an inconſiderable one—what ſay you now, to putting in for the prize?

Lord Bel. A mere child—I have difficulties enough to encounter already, and don't want a wife to add to my perplexities.

Sir Edw. Yet you would take a miſtreſs—marry firſt, Charles.

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Lord Bel. And take a miſtreſs *after*, curſe me if I do—no, no, if ever I marry it ſhall be on a more honorable principle—oh! for ſome kind gentle ſoul, into whoſe faithful boſom I could pour forth the fulneſs of my heart with honeſt confidence, who would ſometimes think for me, direct, council me, watch me with the eye of an enemy, and reprove me with the tenderneſs of a friend.

Sir Edw. Right, right—the chaſte endearments of ſuch a being, leads the mind to the full enjoyment of domeſtic happineſs, awakens all the virtues and calls forth the beſt affections of our nature.

Lord Bel. Why Ned, you ſpeak like one inſpir'd, man; does the thought of your old dowager awaken this tranſport?

Sir Edw. Nay, nay, this is not friendly.

Lord Bel. Well, well, if I muſt not enquire into your ſituation with this *old* lady, let me talk of mine with a *young one*, what muſt I do, to ſecure this lovely ſtranger—if money would purchaſe her favors, I would give half my fortune to obtain them.

Sir Edw. Offer her a ſettlement at once.

Lord Bel. But how, on what terms? on my ſoul I could not offer her wrong again.

Sir Edw. Why you would not marry her?

Lord Bel. By heaven I would—that is, my boy, if ſhe is not a wife already.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. There is a perſon without ſir, who deſires to ſpeak with lord Belmour.

Lord Bel. Bid him ſend up his buſineſs.

Serv. My lord, he ſays he comes to deliver money to your lordſhip.

Lord Bel. What is he a tall thin looking fellow?

Serv. Yes, my lord.

Lord Bel. This can be no other than the quaker I met at Mrs. Hamilton's.

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Sir Edw. Bid him come up. [*Exit Servant.*

Lord Bel. Ned, you muſt ſpeak to him for me, he brings the draft I left with that lady—ſay I am not here—that I have left the town—ſay any thing, you rogue, that will excuſe your receiving the money.

Sir Edw. Yes, yes, leave me to manage him—he is here, away, away. [*Exit* LORD BELMOUR.

Servant uſhering in MATTHEW DAW.

Daw. (*Retreating on ſeeing Sir Edward*) I fear thy ſervant hath led me into an error—it is with the man called lord Belmour that I would ſpeak.

Sir Edw. My friend is not here at preſent, but I believe I underſtand your buſineſs—your name is—

Daw. Daw.

Sir Edw. You bring a meſſage from Mrs. Hamilton.

Daw. She calleth herſelf by *that name.*

Sir Edw. What, *Hamilton* is not her *real name.*

Daw. So I am informed, but I ſpeak after no man.

Sir Edw, One would not betray the confidence of a lady, Mr. Daw.

Daw. Aye, theſe women, theſe women, there is no ſuch thing as perſuading young men, that their happineſs lies in avoiding them.

Sir. Edw, And is this obſervation gathered from other people's follies, or your own Mr. Daw?

Daw. Who I? keep us out of ſuch temptations—do *I* look like ſuch a perſon? (*ſurveying himſelf.*)

Sir Edw. Come, come, to the buſineſs that brought you here.

Daw. I bring a note that thy friend left with her we ſpeak of,

Sir Edw. What, lord Belmour has not brib'd high enough to purchaſe her favors?

Daw. No, he muſt offer her riches of greater worth.

Sir Edw. I dare ſay he muſt, this woman has

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found out, that he has more generosity then prudence.

Daw. She is not one of the common sort.

Sir Edw. O, the Devil! If she is one of your delicate sinners, it is all over with his lordship—a few tears and an appearance of innocence, will secure him her prisoner for life.

Daw. He seemeth indeed of an ingenuous nature, full of health and spirits, but his heart appeareth so free of access, that no wonder if he is betrayed into many indiscretions.

Sir Edw. Is it possible—can *you* think thus?

Daw. Why not—I came out of pure good will, thy friend is ignorant of this woman's *real* situation—she is not what she seemeth to be.

Sir Edw. Just as I suspected—lord Belmour is for ever made the dupe of appearances—you are acquainted with Mrs. Hamilton's way of life.

Daw. Perfectly, I lodge in the same house with her.

Sir Edw. How!

Daw. There is no part of her conduct that justifies thy friend's opinion of this woman.

Sir Edw. I thank you for this caution—If I could convince lord Belmour of her real situation, he would have no scruples of treating with her accordingly, a thought strikes me, I will write to her.

Daw. Not a word friend, that I gave thee a hint of her unhappy circumstances

Sir Edw. Rest satisfied, I will take it all upon myself.

Daw. I must not carry back this note.

Sir Edw. Never fear, my letter will silence all her scruples, come along. [*Exit.*

Daw. Friend, I follow thee. [*Exit.*

SCENE.—*Changes to a Chamber in the Rose-Inn.*

Enter Landlord followed by Servants.

Land. Come lads, quick, quick, see that every thing is in proper order, bid the cook be ready with

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ſome refreſhment againſt his honor arrives, and do you hear, tell her to ſend up all the beſt of them for the *attendants*.

Enter Lord BELMOUR.

Lord Bel. My friend, you are as buſily employ'd in preparing for your gueſts, as if you intended this ſhould be the end of their journeying. Who are you going to receive now?

Land. My lord we have juſt had notice, that our member for the county is on his way hither, and I ſhould be ſorry, if his honor was to find our houſe in diſorder.

Lord Bel. Sir, a parliament man is ſo us'd to a *houſe in diſorder* that I dare ſay he wouldn't make it an objection.

Land. Our member is no common man, ſir, he is a gentleman who poſſeſſes all the honor of our ancient nobility—and he carries in his deportment ſo much of the true nobleman, that reſpect ſollows him wherever he goes.

Lord Bel. Sir, you did well to make him your election.

Land. Our hearts, my lord, on ſuch occaſions, ſhould ever be in our voices—but I won't deny that our member brib'd our favour, becauſe it was with ſuch riches as we could not withſtand—for his honor brib'd us with his virtues. He is the zealous ſupporter of *thoſe* laws, which guard our beſt intereſts, and the firm oppoſer of ſuch as infringe upon our rights; his greateſt pride is his independance, and his higheſt aim the people's good.

Lord Bel. The virtues of your hero have made you an orator, you have aſcribed to him ſo many noble qualities, that I ſhould be glad to be made acquainted with his name.

Land. The honorable ſir Felix Mordant, my lord.

Lord Bel. The uncle of Sir Edward Epworth—you have ſpoken of him as he deſerves. When my

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ſervant returns, tell him to follow me to the Abbey.

Land. I will my lord. [*Exit.*

Lord Bell. Ned *muſt* be apprized of his uncle's arrival. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE.—*A Room in the Inn* (*table ſpread for breakfaſt.*)

Enter HARDY *(meanly dreſſed) followed by Waiter.*

Hardy. I TELL you I *will* find fault—I cannot live without *finding fault*—beſides I have not been in England before theſe twenty years, and I have a right to *find fault*. An Engliſh Inn us'd to afford a man good warm cheer; *here* I ſee nothing but a vile imitation of the fopperies of faſhion—the houſe is better furniſh'd than the table, this indeed looks a little like old times (*ſitting down to the table.*)

Waiter. Sir, you can't breakfaſt in this room.

Hardy. Why not, I ſhan't eat more than I ſhall pay for.

Waiter. That I know nothing about, but we expect other company.

Hardy. Let them come, here is plenty I hope for them and me too, unleſs indeed your company is a corporation.

Waiter. Sir without any more words I muſt beg you to leave this room immediately.

Hardy. Pray ſir does your maſter live by his cuſtomers, or does his *cuſtomers live by him?* I thought every thing might have been had in ſuch a houſe as this, for money, even civility.

Waiter. (*aſide*) I hear my maſter's noiſe, what ſhall I do with this old curmudgeon—he is uſhering up the baronet—pray ſir, conſider ſir, here is a member of parliament, ſir, a perſon of your appearance, this way, ſir, down the back ſtairs if you pleaſe.

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Hardy. No ſir, I don't pleaſe ſir, to go down the back ſtairs *ſir*,—fire and furies—this is kicking down the pillars of the temple, to ſee whether it will ſtand without ſupport.

Enter Landlord uſhering in Sir FELIX MORDANT.

Sir Felix. Thank you, thank you (*ſpeaks apart to his ſervant.*)

Land. (*aſide to the waiter.*) Who is this? How came he here?

Waiter. Sir, he is the quereſt old fellow—he came to our houſe late laſt night—and becauſe he was not quite ſo well accommodated as he expected, he has done nothing but find fault ever ſince, juſt as if he was any gentleman. (*Apart to the landlord.*)

Land. (*Going up to Hardy*) Sir, I am very ſorry, but really this room is engaged.

Sir Felix. Don't let me diſturb any gentleman—pray ſir keep your ſeat.

Hardy. Sir, I am as unwilling to give an offence as I am to take one—and the unprovoked inſolence I have met with here, would be no excuſe for ſhewing my petulance before a ſtranger.

Land. Sir I am very ſorry, if you have met with any incivility in my houſe—I was not at home laſt night when you arriv'd.

Hardy. Why there it is now, I am inclin'd to think if I had brought a retinue of ſervants with me, I ſhould have had no reaſon to complain of your neglect.

Sir Felix. Indeed I am ſorry to hear this—let me have breakfaſt immediately.—(*Exit landlord and waiter*)—will you favour me, ſir, with your company.

Hardy. Sir, I can't think of ſuch an honor, tho' I feel the *liberty* of an Engliſhman, I don't wiſh to abuſe it, by ſuppoſing myſelf under no obligation to my ſuperiors—I wouldn't oppoſe the inſolence of wealth with more readineſs, than I would pay reſpect to a gentleman whoſe behaviour commands it.

Sir Felix. My good ſir, I muſt acquit you of all

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obligations, 'till I can prove, in a better manner, that I am not unworthy your regard.—I presume you are a stranger here.

Hardy. Why- yes, sir, for after twenty years absence from my native country, I don't find I have a friend to welcome me on my return.

Sir Felix. That's hard indeed—what, all your relations are dead.

Hardy, No, no, no—I did not say *that*, I was speaking of *friends*, there is one indeed who I should be glad to see, and in search of whom I am come hither, although, perhaps after all, the girl may be too proud to acknowledge such a shabby old fellow as me for her uncle.

Sir Felix. Why should she, sir?

Hardy. Nay sir, why should she not? Are not all the world in a conspiracy to render poverty contemptible? Is it not even among one of the first impressions our children receive? For how often to frighten them into obedience, are they threatened with being deliver'd to the terror of the village, the man with a shabby coat.

Sir Felix. I hope you will find your niece an exception to your general opinion.

Hardy. Why sir, it is not that I think thus of her, in particular, on the contrary, I have reason to believe her a girl of sense and feeling, but she is now rais'd to a rank in life very much above her former condition—it was all my poor brother's fault—he thought of nothing but marrying the girl to a title, with this hope, half his little patrimony was squandered away on her education, she had beauty which attracted the notice of a young gentleman of fashion, who could not marry her openly without the consent of his relations, so my brother allow'd her to be smuggled into his family—but poor man, he was a *genius*, and they never do any thing like other people.

Sir Felix. It is to be wish'd, sir, that *his* conduct was singular in this instance, but unhappily it is now

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adopted by all ranks of men—and where one family is honourably eſtabliſh'd upon this principle, a hundred are plung'd into miſery and diſgrace—the lady is apprized of your arrival in England, I ſuppoſe?

Hardy No ſir, nor has ſhe any reaſon to expect me, ſince the death of my brother, I have had no intercourſe with her;—from his executors, I learn, that her huſband is here, of courſe his wife is with him—but I beg pardon, I am troubling you with my concerns, forgetting *you* can have no intereſt in them

Sir Felix, Pardon me, ſir, you are miſtaken, I am anxious to know what ſort of a reception you will meet with from your niece—my buſineſs will not detain me here, above a few hours.

Hardy. Sir you are very obliging—If I could be ſo happy as to ſee you again in that time.

Sir Felix. I am going to ſpeak with the landlord; we will talk of it, if you pleaſe, as we go along.

Hardy. Sir I will follow you—and I heartily wiſh every gentleman in parliament, may be as well qualified to take the lead. [*Exit.*

SCENE.—*A Dreſſing Room at lady Courtland's.*

Sir EDWARD *and her Ladyſhip.*

Lady Court. I tell you Sir, I *muſt* have the money paid down immediately.

Sir Edw. Nay madam, you know my utter inability to raiſe two hundred pounds,—I have no reſources left.

Lady Court. That I deny.

Sir Edw. Is not the whole of my eſtate loſt?

Lady Court. What then, the reverſion of your uncle's eſtate is not loſt.

Sir Edw. Madam, madam, would you have me add infamy to folly?—I have already told you I have no title to his fortune, but what his favour *may hereafter* allow.

Lady Court. You have heard ſir from lord Belmour I ſuppoſe, of your uncle's arrival.

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Sir Edw. I have madam, a little while ſince and I ſhould have welcom'd him with pleaſure.

Lady Court. Lord, you are grown very particular all of a ſudden.

Sir Edw. Teach me madam to forget what I was when I became acquainted with your ladyſhip, and you ſhall never hear me reproach you, with my preſent ruin and diſgrace.

Lady Court. And pray ſir, *what was you*, when you became acquainted with me?

Sir Edw. A man, madam, who might have challenged empires to have produc'd a happier, for then reflection was not unwelcome to me.

Lady Court. Pſhaw! did not I introduce you to public gaieties, and private ſplendor? was not my houſe, my table, my ſervants, nay *my fortune* at your command? but for me, how would you ever have experienc'd the delightful emotions that have attended you at the gaming-table? when I have ſeen you in the ardor of expectation, waiting a throw of a die that was to enſure you thouſands.

Sir Edw. Yes, madam, and have you not ſeen me the next moment, ſtruck dumb with horror, at having loſt *thouſands*—would that was all I parted with—*curſe* on ſuch *faſhion*, *curſe* on ſuch *rites*, which ſerve only to corrupt our hearts, by indulging our follies, and cheriſhing our vices.

Lady Court. What tragedy airs are theſe? If you cannot make yourſelf more agreeable than you have done ſince you came hither, your abſence, ſir, will be more deſirable than your company.

Sir Edw. Right, madam, right; he who expects a ſecurity for his happineſs, when he places it in the hands of the unprincipled, deſerves to meet this contempt.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Madam, there is a perſon below who begs to ſpeak with you.

Lady Court. Who is it?

Serv. A ſtranger, madam.

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Sir Edw. An elderly gentleman ?

Serv. Yes, ſir, he would not tell me his name, I did not quite underſtand him, but he ſaid ſomething about being uncle to your honor.

Sir Edw, This muſt be ſir Felix; s'death in my preſent temper, I dare not meet his reproaches.

Serv. Sir, he only aſk'd for my lady.

Lady Court. Shew him into the drawing-room—I will wait on him immediately. [*Exit Servant*

Sir Edw. Madam, ſir Felix, is not a man to be trifled with.

Lady Court. Sir, I am a woman of too much ſpirit to be tied down by thoſe vulgar rules, which reſtrain the common people from following their inclinations. (*Exit Severally*

SCENE—*Changes to a drawing-room.*

HARDY (*looking about him.*)

Hardy. So this is Sir Edward Epworth's houſe—a noble one it is to be ſure—by his living here in ſo much ſtile, it looks as if the young man's family were reconcil'd to my niece—ſhe is a long time coming—ſhe little thinks who is waiting to receive her, poor girl.—I hear footſteps—zounds! what crazy old figure have we got here.

Enter Lady COURTLAND—(*they both look aſtoniſhed.*)

Lady Court. (*aſide*) *This* his uncle's politeneſs, heaven keep me from ſuch breeding—how the brute ſtares.

Hardy. Madam, I apprehend here is ſome miſtake, I aſk'd to ſee the lady of the houſe.

Lady Court. Sir I am the lady of the houſe.

Hardy. (*going*) Madam your ſervant, I underſtood Sir Edward Epworth liv'd here.

Lady Court. Sir, Sir Edward Epworth *does* live *here.*

Hardy. Then madam, I preſume you are the young gentleman's mother.

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Lady Court. *Sir*, do I look like his mother.

Hardy. Madam a thouſand pardons, (*coming a little cloſer*) I perceive my miſtake I ſee you are his *grandmother.*

Lady Court. Do you come here to inſult me, Sir.

Hardy. (*aſide*) An old maid by her ſqueamiſhneſs. Dear madam you wrong me, I have too great a reſpect for ladies of your condition.

Lady Court. Sir I underſtand your ſneer.

Hardy. Madam I am very unfortunate, but without venturing any more gueſſes at *what* you are, allow me to tell you *what I am.*

Lady Court. (*Interrupting him*) Sir, don't think that you can impoſe yourſelf on me—I am acquainted with your claim upon Sir Edward Epworth—but ſir, don't imagine that your calling yourſelf *his uncle*, gives you a title to intrude yourſelf here—this is *my* houſe.

Hardy. Madam, greatly as you may think I am honor'd by my connexion with Sir Edward Epworth. I am not ambitious of proving either his friendſhip or *yours*; you muſt allow me to tell yon my motive for coming here.

Lady Court. Spare your explanation, ſir, I read it in your looks.

Hardy. What do you mean, madam, do you think I come here for what I can get.

Lady Court. Sir I think you come here for what you can *take* away.

Hardy S'death madam, I would dig, beg, *ſtarve*, rather than be indebted to the pride of proſperity for a ſhilling.

Lady Court. What does the old man mean *(aſide.)* Sir I muſt tell you this is very ſtrange language from a gentleman of your conſequence.

Hardy. How dare you madam, how dare you—but you are a—

Lady Court. What am I, Sir ?

Hardy. A woman.

Lady Court. (*ſneeringly*) And *you*, Sir, are a *Noble-*

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man, the deſcendant of an ancient and honorable family; a picture of old times—an obſerver of fooliſh cuſtoms—A ſupporter of prejudices—I'll natured ſplenetic, phlegmatic, moroſe—

Hardy. Whew! what the Devil is the old woman driving at, ſure ſhe is not in her right mind.

Lady Court. Sir I am not to be told what your opinion of my conduct has been, you have made pretty free, ſir, with my name.—but let me tell you ſir, what your anceſtors denominated a vice, we can now prove to be a virtue.

Hardy. She is mad, ſhe is mad.

LadyCourt. And the polite part of the world will never quarrel with a lady for following her inclinations.

Hardy. What a fool have I been to take offence with a poor creature that don't know what ſhe is ſaying—if I had not been blinded by paſſion, I might have ſeen her misfortune in her looks—poor ſoul how ſhe is dreſs'd, a melancholy contemplation, to behold the reaſon of an old woman ſo entirely overſet—I don't like that ſtare tho'—(*looking round the room for a bell*)

Lady Court. What are you about, ſir?

Hardy. (*rings*) Don't be afraid, my good woman, no one ſhall hurt you where I am—be pacified—compoſe yourſelf.

Lady Court. What does the brute mean?

Enter Servant.

Serv. Did your ladyſhip ring?

Hardy. Ladyſhip—no, no (*winking at the ſervant*) it was *I* that rung.—(*whiſpering*)—where is your lady's keeper.

Serv. Sir?

Hardy. I know her ſituation, I ſay where is her keeper?

Serv. Sir? Sir Edward is gone out.

Hardy. What ſhe minds *him* does ſhe, better than any one elſe—ſhe is fond of Sir Edward perhaps.—What does the fellow laugh at her misfortune

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Lady Court. This is too much, inſult me to my face, before my ſervant! Leave my houſe, Sir, leave my houſe inſtantly.—(*Hardy winking at the ſervant*)

Serv. The man is crazy to be ſure.—(*Lady Courtland beckons the Servant.*)

Hardy. I wonder what ſhe is ſaying.

Lady Court. What! is not this man Sir Edward's uncle?

Serv. Not a bit like him, madam—I have ſeen Sir Felix, he is quite another ſort of a gentleman, this perſon ſeems a pooor crazy man, my lady.

Lady Court. It muſt be ſo, nothing but inſanity can account for his *ſtrange behaviour*, I am frighten'd out of my wits at theſe ſort of people—get him out of the houſe, get him out of the houſe.

Serv. (*to Hardy*) Sir, if you pleaſe, we will go into another room.

Hardy. No, no, don't leave this poor creature, if my niece is at home, cannot ſhe come to me here? tell her my name is Hardy—her uncle Hardy, juſt arriv'd from the Weſt-Indies.

Lady Court. The poor wretch has got ſome fancy in his head, and now we ſhall have ſome trouble to get rid of him—if you will be ſo obliging, ſir to go with that gentleman, he will conduct you to the lady who you wiſh to ſee.—(*aſide*)—Theſe people love reſpect.

Hardy. Go with that gentleman.—Poor creature they are all gentlemen with her.

[*Exit Servant.*

Enter Servant, uſhering in Sir FELIX.

Ser. A gentleman, my lady, who enquires for Sir Edward Epworth. [*Exit.*

Lady Court. Sir I am very ſorry the baronet is juſt gone out—if you have any commands.

Hardy. Why Sir, who would have thought of meeting you here, are you acquainted with myniece?

Sir Felix. Is this lady your niece.

Hardy. What an old crazy woman—

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Sir Felix. I presume madam *you* are lady Courtland.

Lady Court. Sir you are not mistaken.

Sir Felix. Then, madam, my name is Mordant—I am the uncle of sir Edward Epworth.

Lady Court. Sir, you do me honor.

Sir Felix. I am inform'd madam, my nephew is an inmate of your ladyship's house.

Lady Court. Sir I have the *happiness* to entertain him.

Sir Felix. And he madam, the *misfortune* to be entertain'd.

Lady Court. Sir ?

Sir Felix. His estate, madam I find, is mortgaged to your ladyship for a considerable sum of money, which he has since lost at your ladyship's faro table.

Hardy. What's this, what's this ? pray sir excuse me, where is lady Epworth ?

Sir Felix. Ask that lady.

Hardy. Where is Sir Edward's wife, madam ?

Lady Court. Did you expect to find her, in my keeping, sir ?

Sir Felix. At least, madam, this gentleman could not expect to find *her husband in your keeping*—for shame, for shame—at your age—

Lady Court. My age ! oh ! what a brute—— sir, you must know very little of the fashionable world, to imagine a lady's age is any obstacle to her pleasures, such stupid prejudices might have been entertained in your great grandmother's time, but, thank heaven, this is an age when people's understandings are *greatly* enlightened.

Sir Felix. Madam, madam, weak as the age is, and abandoned as we are to its follies—still the loud voice of indignation is raised against the bold effrontery of vice; our hearts are not yet so depraved as to have lost *all* respect for virtue—nor are we so familiarized with vice, as to sanction the open and avowed profligacy of a licentious woman.

Enter Lord BELMOUR.

(*retiring on seeing her ladyship engaged.*)

Sir Felix. Lord Belmour !

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Lord Bel. Ah! my dear Sir Felix, I rejoice to see you here.

Sir Felix. If we had met any where *but here*, my lord, I should have been proud to have returned the compliment.

Lord Bel. Sir, I am sorry to be found in any place, that is an exception to your favor.

Sir Felix. So am I, my lord, for I was in hopes your friendship for Edward, was formed on a more honorable principle, than that which has led you to follow him to this vicious retreat.

Lord Bel. Give me leave, sir, to say a few words on the part of my friend.

Sir Felix. My lord, I have no doubt but you have some very persuasive arguments to use, in favor of your friend's profligacy, for those whose candor will admit of his defence—sir, *I* have studied in the old school of morals, when all hostilities had not ceased between vice and virtue; your friend has set defiance to his family, sacrificed his fortune at the gaming table, and abandoned his wife.

Lord Bel. His wife, sir, What! is Sir Edward married?

Sir Felix. Pardon me, my lord, if I doubt your ignorance on this subject.

Lord Bel. Then upon my soul, sir, you do me wrong, for 'till this instant, I never knew that he had formed any such connexion.

Sir Felix. Why then my lord; as my nephew's dishonour is more familiar to that lady than to me, I refer you to *her* for the particulars, *she*, I believe, can inform you, that Sir Edward Epworth *is a married man.* [*Exit.*

Lady Court. To glance at my reputation, *I* who am visited by every body; Sir Felix shall find I am not to be insulted with impunity—his nephew is in my power, let him look to it. [*Exit.*

Hardy. Pray, sir, excuse me, who is this lady, that has just left us? and what are her claims on Sir Edward Epworth?

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Lord Bel. She's an old decoy dowager, who baits her houſe with dice, to lure all the young fools about town. Here Sir Edward's fortune has paid the price of his folly; do you know any thing, ſir, of the lady he married?

Hardy. Sir, ſhe is my niece—I have travelled far to ſee her, with the fond hope of finding her happy in the protection of a huſband—I am an old man, and fooliſhly indulged many pleaſing fancies—poor girl, poor girl—her father loved her tenderly (*wipes his eyes.*)—Sir, you are Sir Edward's friend—tell him from me—

Lord Bel. Sir, if I find he has deſerted his wife, I ſhall tell him from myſelf, he is a villain—in the mean time, if I can give you any aſſiſtance in diſcovering lady Epworth.—

Hardy. Sir, I thank you, I ſhall make it my buſineſs to ſee Sir Edward myſelf——men can't want courage to confeſs their faults, if they are not aſham'd to commit them. [*Exit.*

Enter Miſs EMILY, *ſtarts on ſeeing Lord Belmour.*

Lord Bel. Ah! Miſs Emily!—in tears my love?

Emily. No, no, no—nothing, ſir—(*a noiſe is heard without, Miſs Emily looking towards the door.*)

Lord Bel. I hear voices—'tis Sir Edward's, he has met the baronet.

Emily. Oh! unhappy Emily! (*covering her face with her hand.*)

Lord Bel. Miſs Emily, Miſs Emily, I cannot bear this, what has happened to cauſe this emotion?

Emily. Oh! ſir, my grandmama—Sir Edward Epworth—what will the world ſay of the poor Emily, indeed my lord, I *am* innocent.

Lord Bel. Charming ſenſibility—*innocent*, aye, as an angel.

Emily. What will become of me, every body will confound me in the guilt of my—oh! if my dear father had ſuſpected, that my grandmama would have run away with a married man, he would never have expoſed his poor Emily to this unhappy ſituation—

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I hope, sir, you won't think her conduct any reproach to my dear parents memory—for if I love virtue, I owe it to the example of the best of mothers.

Lord Bel. Her simplicity affects me.

Emily. I am sure I never heard any thing of his having a wife—did *you* know, sir, that Sir Edward was a married man?

Lord Bel. No, on my life, Miss Emily; I have been abroad these four year, and am but just returned.

Emily. I am glad to hear you say so, sir—for I am sure I should have been *very sorry* if *you* had known it.

Lord Bel. Indeed!

Emily. My lord, every one who *appears* good, I rejoice to *find* so—for I think the strongest argument in favor of virtue, is the practice of it.

Enter Sir EDWARD, *much agitated.*

Lord Bel. So, what is the matter now, sir?

Sir Edw. An unmannerly mistake of my uncle's; Sir Felix should have known me better than to have threatened me with the loss of his estate, neither the hope of enjoying, nor the fear of losing it, shall ever influence my conduct—I have too much of his pride in my nature, to be brib'd to do his will.

Lord Bel. Your uncle is jealous of the honor of his family.

Sir Edw. So am I, my lord.

Lord Bel. With this difference, *his* honor is of the *old school*, *your's* of the *new*—and modern honor has past through so many refinements, that it is quite changed in its quality.

Sir Edw. Who dares say this?

Lord Bel. A friend.

Sir Edw. 'Tis false, is it the office of a *friend* to insult a man?

Lord Bel. No, but it is his *office*, to point out his errors, not *palliate them*; to remind him that he is a *man*, and that every species of duplicity, is incompatible with the *dignity of man.*

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Sir Edw. What has made me accountable to *you, sir*, for my actions?

Lord Bel. That which makes all men of high rank, accountable to the whole world.—*Example*; for who ſhall wonder if the ignorant neglect the moral duties of life, when they can find a precedent in one of your exalted ſtation?

Sir Edw. My lord, I will not bear reproof, you know the violence of my temper.

Lord Bel. I know your temper is a damn'd bad temper, Ned, and has always been your worſt enemy—I would not yield to ſuch a pitiful foe—oppoſe it—conquer it.

Sir Edw. Sir, you have gone too far—this is no place, or I would tell you—

Emily. (*Alarmed*) Nothing, nothing, you are friends, what my lord ſaid, was only meant in kindneſs.

Lord Bel. To your wife, Ned—to your *wife*.

Emily. Pray, ſir, no more of this.

Sir Edw. Prepare, ſir, to anſwer this contempt, in a manner you may leaſt deſire. [*Exit.*

Emily. No, no, he does not know what he is ſaying, you are too generous to notice it, I am ſure you are;—my lord, why do you look ſo grave?

Lord Bel. If my fears are juſt, by heaven, he ſhall anſwer for his perfidy—(*going.*)

Emily. (*Greatly agitated.*) You muſt not leave me thus, ſtay, ſir, I conjure you ſtay.

Lord Bel. Why this alarm, Miſs Emily? you don't know what you aſk.

Emily. Yes, yes I do—I am giddy, I am indiſcreet, but I am not unfeeling.

Lord Bel. (*Aſide*) This terror for his ſafety, confirms my fears, her youth, her innocence—you know not half your danger.

Emily. *Danger*, my lord, what danger? you frighten me.

Lord Bel. Sir Edward has a wife.

Emily. What of that?—I care not for Sir Edward,

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Lord Bel. "Your words tell me one thing, your looks another, which am I to believe?"

Emily. (*With dignity*) Which you pleaſe, my lord.

Lord Bel. Nay, you muſt not be angry—I know you entertain too juſt a ſenſe of female delicacy, to allow yourſelf to think ſeriouſly of a man, who can never give you a proof of honourable affection.

Emily. My lord!

Lord. Bel. Do you always feel thus intereſted, on every ſlight occaſion?

Emily. Is *this* a ſlight occaſion, ſir?

Lord Bel. Nay, Miſs Emily, that is not an anſwer to my queſtion—I aſk'd if you were always thus intereſted?

Emily. Yes, I am ſure—at leaſt *I think* I am.

Lord Bel. Suppoſe now, for inſtance, I was going to meet any other perſon, would you be *quite* ſo much affected?

Emily. O yes, *quite*, *quite* as much, pray my lord don't—don't fight with any one—why do you ſmile, ſir?

Lord Bel. Tell me, when you firſt heard Sir Edward had a wife, did not you—did not you feel a ſudden reſentment towards—

Emily. O yes, I felt my whole heart ri with indignation againſt—(*pauſes.*)

Lord Bel. Againſt his wife?

Emily. Oh! no, againſt my *grandmama*, and I wiſh'd—

Lord Bel. What did you wiſh?

Emily. That I could tell his wife how much I pitied her.

Lord Bel. I am ſatisfy'd.

Emily. Then you won't meet Sir Edward.

Lord Bel. (*Smiling*) Not as an enemy, my love.

Emily. I take you at your word.—(*going.*)

Lord Bel. (*With tenderneſs*) Thank you, Miſs Emily, I will not forfeit it.

[*Exeunt ſeverally.*

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ACT IV.

SCENE.—*Mrs. Hamilton's Lodgings.*

Mrs. HAMILTON *and* LUCY.

Mrs. Ham. MY husband here!

Lucy. Yes, ma'am, I could have told you that before.

Mrs. Ham. And you have seen him?

Lucy. Yes, my lady.

Mrs. Ham. How did he look?

Lucy. As well, ma'am, as ever I saw him.

Mrs. Ham. Is he *so* happy? *(sighs)*

Lucy. Not *now*, ma'am, I fancy.

Mrs. Ham. Heav'ns! What new calamity? Speak!

Lucy. Why there it is now, ma'am,—you put yourself into such a fright about his concerns, when I am sure he don't deserve you should ever think about him.

Mrs. Ham. Be not afraid; I have borne his neglect of me, and after that, I can bear any thing.

Lucy. Why then, ma'am, my master is arrested.

Mrs. Ham. Gracious heaven! my husband arrested?

Lucy. I know the house where he is confin'd.

Mrs. Ham. I will go to him this instant—whilst he is in sorrow he *shall* not refuse to see me.—Couldn't you learn the sum?

Lucy. Two hundred pounds, my lady.

Mrs. Ham. Two hundred pounds, no more,—where is Mr. Daw.

Lucy. I have not seen him, ma'am, since your ladyship.

Mrs. Ham. If he has not returned the note, let him inform Lord Belmour, I accept it—till I can redeem this. *(taking a picture from her bosom.)*

Lucy. My master's picture!

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Mrs. Ham. Theſe diamonds are more than worth that ſum; loſe not a moment when you get the money into your poſſeſſion.

Lucy. Your ladyſhip will go with it to my maſter.

Mrs. Ham. No, that ſhall be your office.—To give *him* liberty will be *my happineſs;* to receive it from me, whom he has injur'd will be *his reproach;* his neglect of me has been voluntary, his return ſhall not be conſtrain'd—I rely on your fidelity—let him not know from whom it comes.

Lucy. Dear madam!—

Mrs. Ham. If you diſpute my commands, you will oblige me to perform this duty myſelf. [*Exit Lucy angrily.*] I ſee him return again to me and to his child—I hear him acknowledge his errors; I talk of the future to prevent his thinking of the paſt —Reaſon triumphs over paſſion—Virtue reſumes her power—and I am the happieſt of wives.

Enter MATTHEW DAW.

Did you ſee Lucy, Sir?

Daw. Yea, verily, friend; I met her at the outward door of thy dwelling; I judge this letter will inform thee—

Mrs. Ham. (Interrupting him) What letter, from Lord Belmour?

Daw. No, a man who called himſelf his friend did write it in my preſence— Moreover he did ſay it would ſilence all thy ſcruples, concerning the note thou would'ſt have returned.

Mrs. Ham. (Eagerly) Then you have it, Sir?

Daw. Verily, thy handmaid did demand it of me in haſte; ſhe did ſay it was at thy bidding.

Mrs. Ham. (Taking the letter, breaks the ſeal, Ah! what do I ſee, my huſband's ſignature? *(aſide)* Is it poſſible he could know to whom he wrote?

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Daw. Verily, he ſeemed not ignorant of thy condition. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Ham. (*Reads with great emotion*) "Ma-
"dam, I think it proper to caution you againſt
"attempting to draw Lord Belmour into a laſt-
"ing engagement, for I am too much his friend
"to allow him to be made the dupe of appear-
"ances—thus far I will pledge myſelf that you
"ſhall receive from him a handſome maintenance
"whilſt you behave with candour to merit it,
"Your's, E. Epworth."

Enter Lord Belmour, (*gaily.*)

Lord Bel. I come, my dear madam, to expreſs my grateful thanks for the honor you have done me, by accepting the note.—I have ſeen your ſervant, —I am afraid I have been too ſcrupulous. (*taking out his pocket book.*)

Mrs. Ham. Hold, my lord!—hitherto you have beheld me a *weak* woman, ſinking under the weight of my afflictions—now, Sir, behold me a reſolute one—I *command* you to leave me.

Lord Bel. What can this ſudden indignation mean? I came not, madam to inſult your miſfortunes.

Mrs. Ham. My misfortunes, no, no, no, it is my huſband who is unfortunate, not me;—at this moment I feel my ſuperiority—'tis ſuch wealth as worlds ſhould not tempt me to barter—it has ſoothed me in affliction; ſupported me in adverſity; guided me thro' all hazards it has arm'd me with courage in danger, and now exalts me above this indignity—'tis the riches of an uncorrupted heart!

Lord Bel. Hear me, madam.

Mrs. Ham. What! abandon his wife to the baſe ſolicitations of his friend!—Monſtrous, monſtrous.

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Lord Bel. Madam, you do me wrong if you ſuſpect—by Heaven—

Mrs. Ham. Dreadful profanation! Do you call Heaven to witneſs your *friend's* perjuries or your *own*?

Lord Bel. Madam underſtand me rightly.

Mrs. Ham. Sir, this letter has ſufficiently informed me. Oh, Sir Edward Epworth, to what have you expoſed me!

Lord Bel. Madam, did I hear right? Sir Edward Epworth: can it be? is it poſſible that Mrs. Hamilton is the wife of Sir Edward Epworth?

Mrs. Ham. Sir, I underſtand your reproach—I have been more tender of *his* honour, than he has been of *mine*.

Lord Bel. Reproach you! I honor, eſteem, *adore* your virtues. Madam, from this moment I abjure all fellowſhip with Sir Edward;—truſt me, you have nothing to fear from any future importunities. I will only aſk of you to look upon me as a brother; I have a houſe, madam, make it your's—you have a child, in my affection he ſhall find a father.

Mrs. Ham. Sir, you behold me abandoned by my huſband; my ſoul fired with indignation at his unnatural deſertion of me—torn with conflicting agonies for the fate of my belov'd child—but my lord, you behold me a *wife*, as ſuch I am accountable to the world for my *conduct*,—you behold me a *mother*, as ſuch I am accountable for my *example* to mothers; above all, ſir, you behold me a *chriſtian*; in the holy precepts of my religion I have hitherto ſought for council, and in following its divine inſtructions, I have found the ſweeteſt conſolation;—Sir, I will truſt to it ſtill. [*Exit.*

Lord Bel. What has honor done to create ſuch an hoſt of enemies? In the ſhort ſpace of an

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hour a whole army have riſen up to give her battle; impatience, deſire, love, opportunity,—'twas a hard conteſt—did'ſt thou think I ſhould be vanquiſhed?—Set thy heart at reſt—thy virtues have made a *hero* of me; an Alexander; pooh, pooh! what was Alexander to me? He only ſubdued *others*, I conquer *myſelf*, and where is there an enemy ſo formidable as our paſſions? Where is there a victory more honourable than the ſubduing *them?* [*Exit.*

SCENE *changes to the Roſe Inn.*

Enter Sir EDWARD, *followed by a* WAITER.

Sir. Edw. Lord Belmour not here?

Waiter. No, ſir, but we expect his lordſhip every moment. [*Exit.*

Sir Edw. My releaſe could come from no one elſe; his lordſhip's name was to the note;—generous man; I have been too haſty with him.

Enter Lord BELMOUR.

Sir Edw. Dear Belmour, after what has paſſed I am aſhamed to ſee you. *(offering his hand.)*

Lord Bel. (Shunning him.) Faith you have reaſon.

Sir Edw. I acknowledge it—I am indebted to your friendſhip for more than I can now pay.

Lord Bel. I believe it.

Sir Edw. I have been a fool, Belmour—a wretch.

Lord Bel. I know it.

Sir Edw. You are not acquainted with my worſt follies.

Lord Bel. Then they are damn'd bad ones, indeed.

Sir Edw. Curſed ſpirit for play! into what

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Lord Bel. Pooh!—the fellow is a poor pitiful wretch, he would expoſe her to the inſults of all the fools about town—I have ſeen a letter from him, wherein he abſolutely ſacrifices her to his friend.

Sir Edw. Indeed, my lord, you muſt excuſe me in this affair.

Lord Bel. Impoſſible!—remember the condition. Meet me here at ſeven this evening.

Sir Edw. Well, well, if I muſt—my lord, I am not in ſpirits for this buſineſs, and make no ſmall ſacrifice to friendſhip at this moment in undertaking it.

Lord Bel. Never fear Ned; the ſight of Mrs. Hamilton will raiſe your ſpirits. [*Exit Sir Edward.* Juſt as I remember him when he was a boy, never ſo impatient of rebuke, as when he felt that he deſerved it.

Enter a SERVANT *with a letter.*

Lord Bel. For me!

Servant. Yes, my lord. [*Exit.*

Lord Bel. From Miſs Emily; what can the little girl have to ſay to me?—*(reads)*—"My "lord, after a great many ſtruggles, I have at "length ventured to write to you—lady Court-"land is going out in leſs than half an hour,—if "you come to the Abbey, I can then ſpeak to "you with leſs fear of interruption—I hope I "am not doing a wrong thing, you are too good "and generous to take advantage of my ſimpli-"city, for on your honor the orphan Emily "muſt entirely depend." A fair challenge by Jupiter! what is to be done? Hear what ſhe has to ſay to me? No, ſave her the confuſion of telling me ſhe is without a friend—ſnatch her from the danger her artleſsneſs has expoſed her to, and give to her youth and inexperience a more honorable protection. [*Exit.*

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SCENE *changes to a Room in the Abbey.*

Lady COURTLAND *and* SARAH.

Lady Court. What! the money already paid into the hands of my attorney?

Sarah. Yes, ma'am, the officer had no ſooner arreſted Sir Edward at your ladyſhip's ſuit, than a note was brought to him by a woman.

Lady Court. His releaſe come from a woman?

Sarah. You muſt know, ma'am, for ſome days paſt I have obſerv'd a ſhaby looking woman with a child in her arms, walking continually before the outer gate of the Abbey.

Lady Court. What has this to do with Sir Edward's releaſe?

Sarah. You ſhall hear, ma'am; to day this perſon was there again at the very inſtant Sir Edward was arreſted, ſhe ran to a lodging houſe hard by, and preſently returned to the place of his confinement.

Lady Court. Did the creature ſee the baronet?

Sarah. No, ma'am, ſhe only left a note for him, the man who was preſent when Sir Edward opened it, told me it contained two hundred pounds.

Lady Court. Walk up and down before my very door,—a child too, inſolent!

Sarah. Yes, my lady, and only yeſterday morning, when Sir Edward was handing your ladyſhip into your carriage, I ſaw the woman ſtanding juſt behind, eyeing your ladyſhip with ſuch looks! Mercy on me! I never ſaw any one expreſs their contempt of your ladyſhip more paſſionately.

Lady Court. Contempt of me! Is the girl mad? —make my coming to this place ſubſervient to his purpoſes? Entertain him as a favour'd gueſt

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to be mocked by his creatures? has he no reſpect for my feelings?

Sarah. To be ſure it is a little mortifying to be call'd names by one of her ſort.

Lady Court. Names! She did not dare glance at my reputation?

Sarah. O dear, no; if ſhe had began upon that, *I* could never have ſilenced her—ſhe only called your ladyſhip a miſchievous, ill temper'd, prophane old woman.

Lady Court. What!

Sarah. Ma'am, ſhe ſaid—

Lady Court. Old!!—Ha! ha! ha! the conceit makes me laugh. Ha, ha, ha, it entertains me exceedingly, ha, ha. (*Sarah laughs*) And you, you ignorant brute, to ſtand ſilently by and hear your miſtreſs abuſed. I will go this inſtant to the creature's lodgings, ſurpriſe him in the arms of the ſorcereſs and expoſe his perfidy to the whole world. [*Exit.*

Sarah. Here's a fuſs about the young fellows! —ſure *ſhe* need not think much of their neglect, for they don't even take notice of *me*, an unmannerly ſet. [*Exit.*

Enter Miſs EMILY.

Emily. So, Lady Courtland is going out, and my lord will ſoon be here—how my heart beats! —I ſhall never have courage to tell him. What ſhall I ſay when he comes?—perhaps he will think me too preſuming, and not notice my letter—I almoſt wiſh it may be ſo; yet I hope he will not think *very ill* of me, ſince it was for the ſake of Sir Edward's wife I wrote—how ſhall I tell him ſo? I dare not expoſe my grandmama; ah! here he is.

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Enter Lord BELMOUR.

Lord Bel. Why is Miſs Emily ſo thoughtful?

Emily. (*Confuſed*) No, not thoughtful, my lord?

Lord Bel. The letter I had the honor to receive from you.

Emily (*eagerly*) My lord, I can explain that letter. It was written, Sir—that is, I wrote it to explain.—My grandmama; I mean Lady Courtland.—I am ſorry *that letter*—but now it is no matter and I need not trouble your lordſhip.

Lord Bel. My dear Miſs Emily you muſt allow me to be a little inquiſitive on this ſubject.

Emily. Indeed, Sir, I would rather not talk of that letter, if you pleaſe.

Lord Bel. Now that is quite the reverſe of me, my love, for if you pleaſe, I would *rather* you would talk of that letter.

Emily. O my lord I have not courage to tell you; I have not been us'd to do a wrong thing, and yet, then if you ſhould think the worſe of me

Lord Bel. So beautiful!—Impoſſible.

Emily. Nay it is not generous to flatter me, ignorant as I am of the world, I am not inſenſible of the impropriety I muſt ſeem to be guilty of—don't look at me, Sir. Lady Courtland was my father's mother, then ſpare me the ſhame and confuſion of owning—

Lord Bel. Owning!—Owning what?

Emily. No, no; there is ſomething ſo ſhocking in the very thoughts of telling you, that however you may be gratified in hearing it, you would hate me for making the diſcloſure.

Lord Bel. Baniſh this terror. Is it ſo painful to acknowledge a regard for one who paſſionately adores you? My hand, my heart, my fortune all are your's; do with me what you pleaſe.

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Emily. My Lord, Sir—

Lord Bel. What a chance for happineſs with ſuch an ingenuous creature; no doubt, no fears—all love, conſtancy, gratitude and honor.

Emily. I acknowledge a regard for you, my lord, —What have I ſaid, what have I done—is it generous to mock me, Sir?

Lord Bel. Mock you Miſs Emily!—Did you not write to me of the ſtruggles between your duty and affection—have you not talk'd to me of doubts and fears—invited my friendſhip—beg'd me to ſpare your youth; and not betray a heart that truſted me?

Emily. Yes, yes, *I invited* you hither, ſolicited your attention, courted you to ſtay—and talk'd of doubts and fears—how far your friend Sir Edward's intereſt is concern'd in what I had to ſay is not, now, for me to relate; your lordſhip has ſhewn me the impropriety of putting confidence in a ſtranger—and I thank you, Sir, (*Curtſy's with dignity and exit.*)

Lord Bel. So, I cut a fine figure truly;—what a puppy have I made of myſelf! the poor child could not *feel* aſham'd of betraying her grandmother's crime, but I muſt imagine ſhe was ſtrugling with a ſecret paſſion for me. It is plain ſhe is acquainted with ſome particulars in the old woman's conduct that materially concerns Sir Edward; perhaps I have loſt the only opportunity of diſcovering it, and doing my friend an eſſential ſervice. Curſe my ill ſtars, I never felt ſo like a coxcomb before. I ſhall be miſerable till I ſee her again; dear artleſs girl! For empires would I not rob her of thy charming ſimplicity. [*Exit.*

END OF ACT FOUR.

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ACT V.

SCENE—*Jenkins's House.*

MATTHEW DAW *and* LUCY *discovered seated.*

Lucy. LORD, you have such a coaxing way with you, I shall be telling you more than I ought.

Daw. I have a kinswoman who abideth at the Abbey; she liveth as a waiting woman on lady Courtland—I will go up unto her, and acquaint myself concerning this man Epworth, thy master.

Lucy. Not for the world—if my lady knew I had told you his name, and that he was living at the Abbey, she would turn me out of her service.

Daw. Then would I take thee into mine, Lucy.

Lucy. No, indeed, Mr. Daw, I would not live with a single man for no consideration.

Daw. In my service thou shouldest abide with a wedded one.

Lucy. What are *you* marry'd? then there's nothing in all the world but deceitfulness.

Daw. Nay.

Lucy. (Passionately) Yea; I wonder such a demure man as you an't ashamed of trying to make yourself so agreeable.

Daw. Agreeable.

Lucy. Sitting yourself up for a bachelor to deceive young women.

Daw. Art thou in wrath, fair one, because thou thinkest I am espoused?

Lucy. (Mocking him.) No, I am not in wrath because I thinketh thou art espoused, but because I thinketh thou art a hypocrite. I shall never like you again.

Daw. (Looking fondly at Lucy.) Yea, thou wilt.

Lucy. No wonder the girls so often abuse you for looking so prim and ugly.

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Daw. The girls may be accounted as fooliſh in the knowledge of ſuch things.

Lucy. I thought you an honeſt man, but the men are all wicked alike; thank Heav'n I am not married to any of you.

Daw. Nay, thou needeſt not be ſo very devout in thy acknowledgments—a greater evil may happen unto thee.

Lucy. None of your preaching here—go home to your wife.

Daw. Yea, cheerfully, if thou wilt be there to receive me—how prettily thou wouldeſt look in a plain cap.

Lucy. I hate a plain cap—go home to your wife, I tell you.

Daw. Before I go home to my wife I muſt wed.

Lucy. What! are you *not* wed, Mr. Daw?

Daw. Thou ſayeſt I am, Lucy.

Lucy. That's the way you always put me off, can't you anſwer me ſtraight—yea or nay.

Daw. I am not wed. Thou doſt not like the plain attire of our people, Lucy. (*ſmiling on her.*)

Lucy. To be ſure, Mr. Daw, a plain cap is not ſo becoming as—as a trim'd one—but—

Daw. But if thou lookeſt more pleaſing in the ſight of him who caſteth an eye of affection on thee. (*taking her hand*).

Lucy. Lord bleſs me, what is the man thinking of.

Daw. A wife inſtitution—wilt thou have me for thy wedded huſband?

Lucy. I hear my miſtreſs's bell.

Daw. Can'ſt thou not anſwer ſtreight? yea or nay.

Lucy. The ſpirit doth not move me; I muſt leave thee to go up unto my lady, and do not thou think of meeting me here ſoon, for I ſhall

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not be able to get back into this room this half hour. [*Exit.*

Daw. Which modeſtly biddeth me wait thy return;—Matthew, Matthew, thou art poſſeſſed with the thoughts of this young maiden, until thou art unfitted for all elſe beſide. [*Exit.*

SCENE.—*The drawing-room at Lady* COURTLAND'S.

Enter Miſs EMILY *and* SARAH.

Emily. Are you ſure Sir Edward is in this houſe?

Sarah. Yes, miſs, I ſaw him with my own eyes, not two minutes ago; he came in through the garden gate, muffled up juſt as if he did not wiſh to be ſeen.

Emily. Very well, you may leave me.

Sarah. What is the young one going to make love to him too. [*Exit.*

Emily. This is the only opportunity I may have to ſhew him this letter—how could my grandmama write ſuch a one. Poor lady Epworth, if her huſband did but know how much ſhe is expos'd, might it not ſave them both from miſery? but then ſhall I not betray lady Courtland? To hide a parent's fault ought I to conceal a parent's injuſtice.—I will go inſtantly to Sir Edward, and before I ſhew him this letter, make him promiſe never to take advantage of its contents to the prejudice of my grandmother. (*Going.*)

Enter Lord BELMOUR.

(*Miſs Emily curtſy's with offended pride.*)

Lord Bel. One word Miſs Emily, (*ſhe heſitates,*) it is to expreſs my grief and confuſion.

Emily. (*turning to him,*) My Lord.

Lord Bel. The impertinent interpretation I was ſo unhappy to give your words at our laſt interview—

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Emily. I wiſh to forget Lord Belmour ever thought ſo ill of me, as for a moment to miſtake them.

Lord Bel. And *I*, my ſweet Miſs Emily, that ever I gave pain to a heart ſo ingenuous. What atonement can I offer all lovely as you are?

Emily. Nay, my lord.

Lord Bel. I have eagerly ſought this opportunity of ſoliciting your forgiveneſs—I am miſerable whenever I think of my conduct to you.

Emily. (*Pleaſed.*) Are you indeed, ſir? now I am quite happy.

Lord Bel. So pleaſed, my love, to hear *I am miſerable.*

Emily. Yes, indeed, my lord; for if your lordſhip did not feel ſorrowful at having offended me, I ſhould think you had not yet acquitted me of the ſhocking indelicacy you ſuſpected, and that my own fooliſh conduct had drawn upon me that indignity.

Lord Bel. Charming Emily, do you then forgive me?

Emily. Freely, my lord. I will never think of that converſation again.

Lord Bel. Generous as lovely—this ſweet condeſcenſion—how ſhall I ever be grateful enough? (*tenderly,*) innocent as you are beautiful.

Emily. Don't talk to me thus, ſir—I am not (*heſitates*)—you will make me ſuſpect you ſtill think meanly of me.

Lord Bel. I think you an angel,—nay, be not angry—truth ought never to offend.

Emily. Fie, fie,—I thought you had too great a reſpect for the word to call flattery by ſo ſacred a name—the fops who viſited Lady Courtland in London uſed to talk to me thus—if Lord Belmour ſpeaks the ſame language, how am I to know his lordſhip has not been educated in their *idle* academy?

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Lord Bel. Becauſe, though he may uſe the ſame words—he has learnt to expreſs them from a more correct maſter—his heart is his only inſtructor on this occaſion.

Emily. O no—for that would teach him to ſpeak friendly to me—ſuppoſe now I was your ſiſter—

Lord Bel. Not for the univerſe!—

Emily. Would not you be very angry, ſir (as my brother) with any young man of fine ſenſe who looked upon me in ſo fearful a ſituation, and ſought to increaſe my danger?—pray, my lord, take that thought into conſideration, and reprove ſuch a one accordingly.

Lord Bel. I bow to the correction—and now my love, as you deny me the privilege of uſing ſuch words as would beſt expreſs my admiration—you muſt not be angry if I adopt your frankneſs—ſince to that virtue, among many others, you owe the declaration—(*ſeriouſly*) *I love you, Miſs Emily,*—(*Emily pleaſed, yet doubtful.*)—Nay, turn not from me in doubt—I am not unprincipled.

Emily. (*Affected.*) No, no,—'tis my own unworthineſs, my lord—lady Courtland's voice—pray leave me, ſir.

Lord Bel. Not till you have given me ſome hope. (*Kneeling.*)

Emily. O If you kneel, my lord, I am ſure you'll deceive me.

Lord Bel. See how readily I obey you. (*Riſing.*)

Emily. Go ſir, pray go; I *entreat* you.

Lord Bel. Difficult as your commands are, I ſubmit to them, but remember, Miſs Emily, my heart is in your power—accept it *nobly*—uſe it *generouſly*. [*Exit.*

Emily. She who can do otherwiſe is unworthy ſuch a gift. [*Exit.*

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SCENE.—*A Chamber at the Roſe Inn.*

Enter Sir EDWARD *followed by a* WAITER.

Sir Edw. Is Lord Belmour here?

Wait. Yes, Sir, I ſee him coming this way.

Sir Edw. (looking out) Who is that with him?

Wait. A mighty quiſical old gentleman, that quarrels with every body he meets. [*Exit.*

Sir Edw. Pſha!—to be detained by this perſon. (*walks to the back part of the ſtage.*)

Enter Lord BELMOUR *followed by* HARDY.

Lord Bel. (aſide) How deviliſh unlucky!—'Sdeath Sir Edward here—they have never met—if they diſcover each other, my plotting is at an end.

Hardy. I tell you I am in a paſſion, and I will be in a paſſion--odds life, didn't he marry my niece? and didn't he forſake her? and ſhall not I have the ſatisfaction of ſeeing him miſerable for it.

Lord Bel. Never fear, his preſent ſituation is not to be envy'd. (*looking ſignificantly at Sir Edward*)

Hardy. So much the better. Odd's life, theſe young fellows think of nothing but their pleaſures.—I will appeal to this gentleman.

Lord Bel. Pooh! Pooh! What has this ſtranger to do with your concerns? Don't trouble the gentleman he ſeems under ſome uneaſineſs himſelf.

Hardy. Then he will the more readily feel for me. *(to Sir Edward)* Perhaps you know what it is to have the being you love deſerted by her huſband, if ſo, you will perſuade my lord what-do-ye-call-um here, to do juſtice to a miſerable old man.

Lord Bel. The devil!

Hardy. I had a brother, Sir, (*Lord Belmour getting between them to prevent his ſpeaking.*) Stand

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aſide, I will tell my own ſtory I ſay, Sir, I had a brother.—

Lord Bel. Pſha! a fig for your brother!

Hardy. What do you mean by that, Sir? My brother had a daughter—

Lord Bel. I will tell the ſtory in half the time myſelf. Your niece married—

Hardy. A damn'd raſcal Sir,—The inhuman dog deſerted her.

Lord Bel. You came in purſuit of him.

Hardy. The profligate refuſes to meet me.—Will not let me know where my niece is to be found?

Sir Edw. (with emotion) Was his wife virtuous?

Hardy. Aye, and young and beautiful,—every thing, but—

Sir Edw. (anxiouſly) But what?

Hardy. Rich, Sir, (*Sir Edward appears affected*) —I ſee you are a feeling man.

Sir Edw. (*anxiouſly*) He made ſome proviſion for his wife?

Lord Bel. No, left her to be ſupported by the bounty of ſtrangers.

Sir Edw. Are you acquainted with her?

Hardy. Yes, to be ſure he is; 'twas he that told me of her ſituation—promiſed to take me to her. and now refuſes to tell me where ſhe is to be found.

Sir Edw. Belmour, I begin to ſuſpect you.

Lord Bel. (*alarmed*) No, I hope not.

Sir Edw. Your *Miſtreſs Hamilton* is—

Lord Bel. What?

Sir Edw. A deſerted wife.

Lord Bel. And her huſband.

Sir Edw. A villain!

Lord Bel. Is that all you ſuſpect?

Sir Edw. Reſtore her to her friends, as you value your future happineſs.

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Hardy. A very ſenſible old gentleman.

Sir Edw. (*to Hardy*) His lordſhip will give her up.

Lord Bel. 'Sdeath, Ned, anſwer for yourſelf. Give her up, never—unleſs her huſband ſhould demand her of me.

Hardy. Her huſband indeed. Has the woman no more ſpirit, than to expoſe herſelf a ſecond time to his pride and malice. I warrant ſhe ſhall never be indebted to him for a maintenance. I can ſupport her without his aſſiſtance. I want no more of the profligate than to know where ſhe is to be found.

Lord Bel. But if he has made a property of her already.

Hardy. What!

Lord Bel. Conſigned her to his friend, perhaps.

Hardy. No, damn it, bad as he is, I don't believe him ſuch a monſter as that either. Odd's life if I thought. I will go this moment to the old one, blow up the Abbey,—ſet fire to the whole town but what I will bring the villain to light. [*Exit.*

Lord Bel. That's throwing a light on a man's actions with a vengeance.

Sir Edw. What does this mean?

Lord Bel. I have no time to tell you now, I am impatient 'till you ſee Mrs. Hamilton.

Sir Edw. I know too well the miſery of indulging theſe guilty paſſions, however I will follow you. Not to aid in deceiving this woman but as a fiend, to ſave you both from deſtruction.

Lord Bel. Oh, you are a rare fellow, Ned.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*A Chamber at the Abbey.*

Enter SARAH *followed by* DAW.

Sarah. I tell you 'tis no uſe your following me—I know nothing of Sir Edward. He don't live

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here now; and, beſides if he did what buſineſs can ſuch a man as you have with him?

Daw. Perchance, couſin Sarah, I could ſpeak ſuch words unto him, as would touch the ſecret ſpring of his affections, and awaken a feeling for his wife and child.

Sarah. Perchance, if you were to come here preaching ſuch ſtuff, into the ears of a gentleman, you might make your next ſermon, in the horſe-pond.

Daw. Sarah! it grieveth me ſorely, to ſee thee ſo loſt to maiden baſhfulneſs. This houſe is an abomination. (*noiſe without*)

Sarah. And now you may grieve ſorely to be found in it, for here comes my lady. I would not inſure your ears if ſhe catches you.

Daw. (*alarmed*) I fear not the voice of a man, but I confeſs to thee, the anger of a woman maketh me tremble. Is there no back door to this apartment. (*looking round him with encreaſing fear*)

Sarah. My lady is ſuch a ſpirit; what ſhall I do with you.

Daw. Verily I am in a fearful condition (*voices heard without*) a brawling woman's voice is hateful unto my ears,—I would fain climb up the chimney.

Sarah. This comes of your inquiſitiveneſs. Here, here, (*opening a door*)

Daw. (*Peeping in*) A bed room. (*is retiring*)

Sarah. 'Tis my lady's—creep under the bed, or behind the curtain—any where ſo you are not diſcovered.

Daw. What difficulty a man hath to withdraw himſelf from bad women. Couſin Sarah, (*in a half whiſper, from the door*) have the goodneſs to cough aloud, when thou thinkeſt I may come forth without fear. (*Goes into the room*)

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Sarah. Here's that crazy old fellow again with my lady. If they diſcover Simon Pure, I'll ſwear I know nothing of his being there.

Enter Lady COURTLAND *followed by* HARDY.

Lady Court. What do you mean by following me thus? Am I never to be free from your ſuſpicions? —I tell you once more Sir Edward is not here.

Hardy. That's a damn'd — Madam, I tell you he is—So bring him out of his hiding place

Lady Court. Vile ſlanderer! I conceal him!

Sarah. How can you think of ſuch a thing, Sir? —The baronet has quite deſerted my lady

Hardy. (*Pleaſed*) No, has he?

Lady Court. Who bid you ſpeak?

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. There's a young woman without, ma'am who ſays ſhe wants to ſpeak with a quaker man that is here.

Lady Court. A quaker! there's no ſuch perſon here.

Sarah. (*alarmed*) A quaker indeed!

Serv. She ſays ſhe ſaw him go into the houſe.

Sarah. Nonſence! Ten to one this is ſome trick of Sir Edward's:—he has entered the Abbey again in diſguiſe, and this is one of his women after him.

Hardy. Oh, oh,—a diſguiſe—a quaker too.

Lady Court, What new inſult!

Sarah. I will ſpeak to the woman myſelf, ma'am

[*Exeut Sarah and Servant.*

Lady Court. Now, Sir, I hope you are ſatisfied Sir Edward is not here?

Hardy. By no means, madam; I am pretty well ſatisfied he is here; but a broad brim ſhall ont conceal him.

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Lady Court. By what powerful magic do you think he will appear?

Hardy. Deſcribe a circle with your wand, and we ſhall have him in the midſt of it. My cane perhaps will do as well. (*gives three gentle taps*)

Lady Court. Inſupportable!

Hardy. He does not appear. There are other ſignals! (*coughs aloud*)

Daw. (*Opens the door ſoftly, puts his head out, in a low whiſper*) May I come forth? (*walks out*)

Lady Court. (*ſcreams*)

Hardy. At length your ladyſhip hath raiſed him.

Lady Court. Wretch! how came you into my houſe?

Hardy. Odds life, madam, let me ſpeak firſt.

Daw. I appeal unto Sarah.

Hardy. I ſhall choak with paſſion,—Sir Edward, Sir Edward, where is my niece? My name is Hardy—Hardy, Sir, the brother of the good man, whoſe daughter you married, and have ſo inhumanly deſerted.

Lady Court. (*Paſſionately*) And my name, Sir, is Courtland—Anſwer me this inſtant, at whoſe inſtigation you have dared offer me this indignity? (DAW *looks at them both in ſilent wonder*)

Hardy. Her matchleſs beauty, her ſpotleſs innocence.

Lady Court. Neglected, expoſed, betrayed.

Hardy. Odds life, what recompence Sir, can you make to atone for this cruelty?

Daw. I am confounded at thy ſayings!

Hardy. And I at thy impudence.—Mark me young man, though I am old, I have an arm yet to puniſh inſolence—I will have immediate ſatisfaction.

Lady Court. So will I, Sir.

Hardy. Not of this gentleman, if my piſtols are faithful to their duty.

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Daw. Piſtols! My friend thou talkeſt to me in parables.

Hardy. (*Paſſionately*) Calleſt thou me friend?—Wretch (*ſeizes him by the collar*) where is my niece?

Daw. (*Diſengaging himſelf*) I pray thee looſen thy hand from my coat—thou doſt give me great pain.

Enter SARAH.

Sarah. The ſame young woman again, ma'am,—Now ſhe aſks for Sir Edward, and calls herſelf Lucy.

Lady Court. Do they take the Abbey for a Regiſter Office?

Daw. Sarah, ſay unto theſe people what thou knoweſt of me.

Sarah. A Regiſter Office truly! for here's a fellow that I never ſaw before wanting me to give him a character. [*Exit.*

Lady Court. This clamour is not to be borne.—Where are all my people to diſperſe theſe wretches? [*Exit.*

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. (*Seeing Daw, runs up to him.*) So, ſir, this is keeping your word, is it?

Hardy. Another after him—I ſhall choak with rage.

Daw. I appeal unto Sarah.

Lucy. Thou mayeſt appeal unto Satan;—oh! Matthew! Matthew!

Hardy. Eh! what—odd's life—if after all—and now I look at him he don't appear much like a baronet—who is this man, child?

Lucy. Matthew Daw, and pleaſe your honor,—a poor, fooliſh, watchmaker.

Hardy. The devil he is—to waſte my wrath upon the Pariſh Dial—This is regulating one's

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time-piece by an ill-going clock, 'till one is curſedly out in the hour.

Daw. I tell the what friend—if thou calleſt ſo often on Belzebub, when thy time-piece ſtoppeth he will be for winding thee up.

Hardy. (*angrily*) And who did you call upon when you came ſneaking out of that bed-chamber!

Daw. *My* couſin Sarah.

Lucy. What, hid in a bed chamber with your couſin Sarah—grant me patience—thou vile man—I ſhan't *cry tho'*—it don't hurt me—(*burſting into tears*) Cruel—cruel Matthew. [*Exit.*

Daw. Who judgeth of a man only by appearance condemneth him raſhly,

Hardy. Yes, and he who is in purſuit of a profligate, meets with ſo many anſwering that deſcription that he is in danger of throtling one half the young fellows he meets before he encounters the identical perſon.

Daw. My viſit unto this houſe was directed by charity, who led me hither in behalf of the injured wife of the man they call Epworth—for which I have met with nothing, but fierce looks and contemptious ſayings.

Hardy. What's that Sir Edward's wife—do you know where ſhe is to be found?

Daw. Perchance I do.

Hardy. Tell me, I beſeech you.

Daw. Nay—I ſhall not communicate with thee. [*Exit.*

SARAH *Entering and uſhering in* Sir FELIX.

Sarah. I will let my lady know, ſir, you are here. [*Exit.*

Sir Felix. Mr. Hardy your moſt obedient.

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Hardy. (*ſulkily*) Sir, your ſervant.

Sir Felix. I owe you an apology for not keeping my promiſe.

Hardy. Don't mention it, ſir, I beg—you are a parliament man.

Sir F. At the time I was to have met you at the Roſe Inn, I was engaged in an affair that materially concerns us both, Mr. Hardy.

Hady. Nothing leſs than the good of the nation, I hope ſir.

Sir F. Private duties, my good friend, leading to public benefits—the good of the nation is beſt promoted by theſe means—to receive a prodigal nephew who returns repentant to me, is not, I hope, to be otherwiſe employ'd.

Hardy. And is this the houſe appointed for your meeting, Sir Felix, where there are ſo many items of his wickedneſs.

Sir Felix. No, my buſineſs here is with lady Courtland, as this letter will explain. (*offering it to him*)

Hardy. (*offended, refuſing to read it*) You may have reaſon, Sir Felix, to forgive Sir Edward Epworth—he is your nephew—*I* don't feel myſelf under any ſuch obligation.

Sir Felix. Your reſentment of his conduct is ſo natural I can ſay nothing to ſoften it.

Hardy. What do you mean by that, Sir—do you take me for an ignorant, unfeeling old blockhead—Sir, I muſt tell you I am no ſuch perſon—odd'slife a man may be generous without underſtanding the claſſics!—Tell me, Sir, your nephew lov'd my niece;—that he was led unwarily from his home at ſome unguarded hour, by his thoughtleſs companions to the gaming table—tell me at one unlucky throw he loſt the wholeof his eſtate—and I will yet forgive him—but don't tell me he has left my niece, houſe-

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leſs, pennyleſs—an outcaſt upon an unfeeling world, while he is living here, in guilty ſpendour.

Sir Felix. You have imagined rightly, Mr. Hardy, of the manner in which he was betray'd into the folly of gaming—he deſcribes it with the keeneſt remorſe—but with far greater anguiſh the loſs of his Emilia—unable, he ſays, to endure the ſight of his wife and child after the injuries he had done them—he hurry'd hither almoſt frantic with deſpair—

Hardy. And left them to periſh—a refinement upon feeling indeed!

Sir Felix. Not ſo, he plac'd a ſum of money for their uſe in the hands of his bankers, and it was not till this morning he diſcover'd, through their means, a forgery on his name, by which his wife has been depriv'd of the money, and on enquiry, having left her uſual place of abode, is no where to be heard of—(*Hardy much affected*) Mr. Hardy be aſſur'd I feel for you very ſenſibly on this occaſion.

Hardy. Sir, I don't want your pity. I don't want any man's pity; I am a very wretched old man—I go about from houſe to houſe in ſearch of my niece—I aſk every body I meet if they have ſeen her, the only human being who has a claim upon my heart is become an outcaſt and a wanderer. (*in a burſt of grief*) Why will they not tell me where ſhe is to be found? [*Exit.*

Enter Lady COURTLAND.

Lady Court. Sir, I muſt tell you theſe repeated viſits are by no means agreeable to me.

Sir Felix. A very few words, madam, will explain this intruſion—your ladyſhip can be no ſtranger to this hand writing.

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Lady Court. (*alarmed*) Ah! my letter to Jarvis.

Sir Felix Written by your ladyſhip, unknown to Sir Edward, to obtain a ſum of money appropriated by him to the uſe of his wife.

Lady C. Vile inſinuation!

Sir Felix. Are you aware, Madam, of the light in which your conduct will appear in a court of juſtice.

Lady C. Sir, I defy your power.

Sir F. Have a care. madam, how you provoke it. This letter forwarded to your ſteward, who was then in London, incloſed a draft on my nephew's bankers with Sir Edward's name, which he never ſign'd.

Lady C. What does this prove?

Sir F. So much, madam, that unleſs you conſent to ſign this Paper (*offering it her*)

Lady C. (*alarmed, looking at it*) What, bind myſelf to reſtore Sir Edward's Eſtate?

Sir F. Conſider, madam, conſider well the miſchief which has ariſen from your conduct, in doing ſo, you will naturally reflect on your preſent ſituation, ſo different from any other lady's in the ſphere you move—age is a ſeaſon ſhould be pre-eminently diſtinguiſhed for virtue.

Lady C. My age—do you again make it a ſubject of deriſion.

Sir F. Never—When I behold a being who has paſs'd her youth with honor, gracefully declining into the vale of years—when I ſee her cheriſh'd by that love and reſpect her goodneſs has created—I look upon her as one who approaches ſo near the perfection of an angel, as ſoon to become one, whilſt a ſentiment riſing almoſt to devotion is inſpired by her preſence.

Lady C. No ſuch ſenſation is excited by my preſence, it ſhould ſeem.

Sir F. This is not a ſeaſon for ceremony, madam, truth requires I ſhould ſpeak freely—unleſs you

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inſtantly agree to the propoſal I have offer'd, your ladyſhip will be plac'd in the power of thoſe who may exact a ſeverer penalty.

Lady C. Am I to be threaten'd into a compliance, It is proper I ſhould know how that letter came into your hands.

Sir F. There, madam, you muſt excuſe me.

Lady C. On no other condition will I ſign this paper.

Sir F. Do ſo then, madam, do it inſtantly—and I pledge myſelf you ſhall be inform'd.

Lady C. (*Signs it.*) There, ſir, (*gives it him.*)

Sir F. Through the careleſsneſs of your ladyſhip's ſteward, it fell into the hands of Miſs Emily.

Lady C. Ah!

Sir. F. Innocent of the fatal conſequence it might have proved to your ladyſhip, ſhe gave it to Sir Edward.

Lady C. The young viper, to cabal with them againſt me.

Sir F. Alarmed at Sir Edward's threats on receiving it, ſhe flew to me to intercede for your ladyſhip.

Lady C. I will marry to-morrow on purpoſe to diſinherit her.

Sir F. At preſent, madam, ſhe is under my protection.

Lady Court. I will never ſee her more.

Sir F. I knew and reſpected her father—have a daughter of my own—and if the ſweet orphan Emily will be contented to ſhare my love with her; ſhe ſhall be my child alſo, madam. I take my leave.

Lady Court. (*with affected calmneſs.*) One word, Sir Felix, your nephew is too pitiful a wretch to excite even my indignation—I deſpiſe the hypocrite,

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I renounce him for ever, and as an acknowledgment for the favours I have received of your family, I ſincerely wiſh them all the happineſs, pride, poverty, and contempt are capable of beſtowing.

[*Exeunt ſeverally.*

SCENE V.—*Mrs. Hamilton's Lodgings.*

Mrs. HAMILTON *at a table with a letter in her hand*—LUCY *ſtanding at a diſtance watching her.*

Lucy. You muſt not be unhappy, ma'am, to be ſure nobody was ever us'd ſo wickedly—but ptay ma'am don't be unhappy.

Mrs. Ham. I am not unhappy (*ſighs heavily*)—not at all unhappy.

Lucy. O—I can't bear this—ſhe does not know what ſhe is ſaying—pray ma'am don't look ſo ſadly:

Mrs. Ham. No, no, no; I am quite well—quite eaſy—I don't even ſhed a tear.

Lucy. O my dear, dear lady, you muſt not take on thus—conſider what will become of your own ſweet boy, if you forſake him.

Mrs. Ham. Did you ſay my child—yes, yes, I am a mother—I believe I am not quite well—I feel a tightneſs here—(*laying her hand on her heart—Lucy gives her a chair—a loud knocking at the door—Mrs. Hamilton riſes alarm'd.*)

Lucy. What will become of us.

Mrs. Ham. Another letter, I will not read it—do not bring it to me, good girl—for mercy's ſake do not—it will drive me mad.

[*Exit Lucy.*

(*Mrs. Hamilton walks about greatly agitated.*)

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. 'Tis Lord Belmour's voice—madam, ſhall I ſay your ladyſhip is engaged?

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Mrs. Ham. (angrily.) Any thing—I will not be interrupted—*(walks to the back part of the ſtage reading.* [*Exit Lucy.*

Enter Lord BELMOUR *and Sir* EDWARD—*(the latter in diſguiſe.)*

Lord Bel. Softly, ſoftly, let me introduce you to her *(is going forward, returns to ſir Edward.)*—Once more madam I venture to intrude, but I bring with me one who I hope will ſatisfy your moſt ſcrupulous delicacy.

Mrs. Ham. (greatly agitated,) Sir, in my preſent ſituation this conduct is cruel—expoſed to this ſtranger.

Lord Bel. A ſtranger—O, my dear madam, no, a very near relation, my uncle—Mrs. Hamilton, ſir—*(Mrs. Hamilton turning to ſir Edward with an inquiſitive air.)*

Sir Ewd. (utters a cry of aſtoniſhment.) By heavens my wife!!!

Lord Bel. My uncle, madam, is acquainted with the fervour of my paſſion, and contrary to moſt men in his ſituation, he ſays if you ſhould incur any blame by flying to me for protection, he will take it upon himſelf—*won't you uncle—(in his ear.)*

Sir Edw. Do I hold faith with men or devils.

Lord Bel. Did you ſpeak, uncle.

Sir Edw. (violently agitated.) Sir this outrage, this unprecedented villainy.

Lord Bel. (aſide to Sir Ewd.) What the devil ails you, Ned—*(aloud)* My uncle, madam, has the misfortune to have a little heſitation in his ſpeech.

Sir Edw. Sir, a huſband's honor.

Lord Bel. What the devil have you to do with her huſband's honour? If the poor man has never ſhewn any regard for it himſelf, why the deuce ſhould we?

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Sir Edw. Does he mock my injuries—make a jeſt of my reſentment.

Mrs. Ham. Sir, your conduct appears as odious to this gentleman as to me.

Lord Bel. O no, he ſees it in its true light and is only hurt to think, that a man capable of inflicting the ſevereſt tortures, without pity or remorſe, no ſooner ſuſpects his own happineſs endanger'd, than his *nice* and exquiſite ſenſe of feeling would willingly draw down a ten fold vengeance on the aggreſſor.

Sir E. Damnation!

Lord B. Come, come, uncle—tell this lady I love her to diſtraction—perhaps you could ſpeak with more eaſe on this ſubject in my abſence—(*ſir Edw. ſtarts*)—what, you are not afraid of a fine woman (*Sir Edward endeavouring to leave the Room, lord Belmour preventing him.*) Nay, no retiring—you are fairly in for it—I have brought you here Ned, to behold a deſerted wife, and leave you to find excuſes for a huſband's neglect of her. [*Exit.*

Sir E. (*greatly agitated.*) Have I been in danger of becoming the pander of my wife's ſeduction?—Juſt Heav'n, in this moment of complicated feeling, what horrors have I eſcaped!

Mrs. H. I will not ſuppoſe, Sir, that lord Belmour has your ſanction to inſult me, and as you are his friend, I entreat you to tell him, his viſits here *muſt* not be repeated. (*going.*)

Sir E. Stop, I conjure you—one word.

Mrs. H. (*turning to him with dignity.*) Sir!

Sir E. (*irreſolute—in extreme agitation.*) How ſhall I ſpeak to her.—(*A noiſe is heard.*)

Enter DAW—(*ſpeaking to one without.*)

Daw. I pray thee tarry awhile, and I will bring her unto thee.

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Mrs. H. (*alarmed*). Who is coming this way?

Daw. The ſervants of juſtice—and like unto many others in place, abuſing their maſter.

Mrs. H. What do they come here for?

Daw. Be not diſmayed—Thou ſhouldeſt have paid thy rent.

Sir Edw. Bailiffs!

Daw. Yea—(*going up to him*) one of them I am informed is here in diſguiſe—*thou* haſt a youthful countenance.

Sir Edw. Villain be mute!

Mrs. Ham. Will they tear me from my boy—will they take me to a priſon?

Daw. Be not alarmed—I will ſave thee from the power of the philiſtines—(*going.*)

Sir Edw. Hold! what art thou?

Daw. Verily, a man.

Sir Edw. Shall ſhe be indebted to thee?—why do you interfere? (*greatly agitated.*)

Daw. Look upon this woman, deſerted by her huſband, and thou art anſwered.

Sir Edw. (*Gives him money*) Go quickly, and ſave me from deſperation.

[*Exit* DAW—*a noiſe is heard without.*

Mrs. Ham. (*to Sir Edw.*) Oh! hide me, protect me!

Sir Edw. (*Throwing off his diſguiſe*) Whilſt I have life!—(*Mrs. Hamilton utters a cry of terror, and ſhirnks from his embrace.*)

Sir Edw. Emilia! am I not your huſband?

Mrs. Ham. Huſband!—oh! Edward!—(*ſhewing the letter.*)

Sir Edw Not a word—not a look!—by the oath of everlaſting faith you gave me, I call upon you to hear me—I have been guilty, Emilia.——

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Mrs. Ham. I desire no confession—I see what you feel—and pity you, before we part for ever.

Sir Edw. Ah! for ever!

Mrs. Ham. *(In a burst of grief kneels to him)* My boy—do not utterly forsake him!

Sir Edw. Into what contempt am I fallen—a husband—a father—no station honourably supported—no duties properly fulfill'd.

Mrs. Ham. That look of horror, Edward—*(putting her hand on his arm.)*

Sir Edw. Borne down the stream of indolent pleasure—no councellor but my passions—and no master but my will.

Mrs. Ham. What is it you meditate?

Sir Edw. Tortur'd with remorse for the past, without hope for the future—driven to desperation.

Mrs. Ham. Whither would you transport my hurry'd thoughts?—that letter!—

Sir Edw. Merciful powers!—do you suspect me of the horrid crime that cruel letter implies?

Mrs. Ham. *(tares the letter rushing into his arms)* No, no, I have no doubts, no fears—take my forgiveness of the past; you are my husband still.

Sir Edw. My wife, my Emilia—this angel-goodness overpowers me.

Lord BELMOUR *and* HARDY, *without.*

Hardy. Aye, aye, I shan't forgive her tho'—*(entering.)*

Mrs. Ham. Lord Belmour, and a stranger with him.

Hardy. It is, it is the same I parted with—the very image of her mother!

Mrs. Ham. My dear uncle! welcome—welcome!

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Hardy. (*embracing her*) No, I an't welcome!—I won't be welcome!—curſe this choaking!—(*Lord Belmour and Sir Edward retire to the back part of the Stage.*)

Mrs. Ham. Your return ſo unexpected—forgive theſe tears.

Hardy. (*Wiping his eyes*) I cannot bear this—what, I warrant, you think I am come home a rich old codger; no, no, poor as a poet.

Mrs. Ham. It ſhall be my happineſs then to ſooth and comfort you.

Enter Sir FELIX, *leading in* EMILY.

Sir Felix. Edward, let me congratulate you on your return to virtue and to happineſs.

Sir Edw. (*embracing him*) Can you forgive me?

Sir Felix. Nay, nay—I know not whether I ought to forgive myſelf, unreſtrained folly in youth begets preſumption in manhood—but where is your wife? (*Mrs. Hamilton comes forward.*)

Sir Edw. My Emilia is already prepar'd to eſteem and honour you.

Sir Felix. (*embracing her*) Had I known her worth earlier, much miſery might have been ſpar'd us all.

Mrs. Ham. This unexpected condeſcenſion,—I have not words to ſpeak the feelings of my heart.

Sir Felix. Now, Edward, you behold—but I will leave your own heart to comment on the paſt, whilſt I provide for your future happineſs.

Hardy. What, I warrant, I *ſhan't* ſpeak firſt?—ſtand aſide, ſir, if you pleaſe—look you young gentleman, I am a comical ſort of an old man—there is a proud ſtruggle in your mind, that looks like remorſe of conſcience—here is my hand—you married my niece without a ſhillling—don't interrupt me—her father gave her to you with nothing but youth and

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beauty for her portion—now take her from me with approved virtue—and ſixty thouſand pounds—I am not jeſting—it was hardly earn'd—well, well, it will wear the better—If by concealing my riches from my niece, I have diſcover'd her real ſentiments—I have had my reward.

Sir F. (*to Mrs. Ham.*) Allow me, madam, to preſent to you a young lady, who is every way worthy your protection.

Lord B. I wiſh the truſt had been delegated to me, Sir Felix.

Sir F. What ſays Miſs Emily?

Emily. (*To Sir F. with great emotion*) Do not let me do or ſay a wrong thing—I have no parent—you ſhall be a father to me, ſir, I will be only at your diſpoſal—(*hiding her face on his arm.*)

Sir F. Thus, then I act a parent's part—and give you the moſt ſuitable protector—you have honor to reward her virtues, and merit to deſerve them—take this excellent young creature from me, my lord.

Lord B. (*rapturouſly*) As the moſt precious gift man is capable of receiving.

Enter DAW, *leading in* LUCY, *dreſſed like a Quaker.*

Lord B. Who have we here? my friend, Mr. Daw—and Mrs. Lucy, turn'd quaker.

Lucy. Yea, friend—this man hath converted me unto the true faith.

Daw. Yea—I have eſpouſed this woman.

Mrs. H. This is the generous man who would have reliev'd me in my diſtreſſes.

Sir E. Accept my thanks.

Hardy. Come, come—we'll ſettle this another time.

Lord B. Nay, here allow *me* to ſpeak—the induſtrious mechanic, who by his ingenuity, furniſhes

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his countrymen with ſo many of the neceſſaries of life, at the ſame time, affording them an example of moral rectitude, is a character ſo highly deſerving every honeſt man's praiſe, that I am proud in having this opportunity of paying it.

Daw. Friend, thou oppreſſeth me!

Mrs. H. How ſhall I be grateful enough for ſo many bleſſings?

Sir F. By continuing, my dear child, as you have done to deſerve them—your conduct under ſo many diſcouraging circumſtances, has been a noble proof of conjugal fidelity.

Lord B. And what do you ſay to mine, Sir Felix?

Sir F. (Giving him his hand) Why ſay, there are ſtill ſome noble ſpirits among our *youth*, to maintain the cauſe of virtue, however, the contrary may be inſidiouſly imply'd.

Daw. Verily, ſhe needeth ſome brave defenders; vice hath menaced her ſome time with an *invaſion*, and by holding her threats in contempt, we have allowed her to ſtrengthen her power, *until* ſhe is become a formidable enemy.

Sir F. Right, Mr. Daw—But as virtue is ſtill dear to humanity, in the hour of attack, we will rally round her ſtandard—and give to ſurrounding nations, not only an example of our intrepidity as warriors, but of our *moderation* as men.

EPILOGUE.

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EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY T. DIBDIN, ESQ.

SPOKEN BY MR. MATTHEWS,

WITH your permiſſion I have not done yet,
But am ſome few remaining lines in debt;
Lines which vain faſhion forms with jingling chime.
Though men call'd poets and by them call'd rhyme.
A Heatheniſh ſort of thing I'm bid to ſpeak,
An E-pi-logue—the word to me is Greek,
And as a ſort of folks, called criticks, ſay,
'Tis often found as foreign to the play;
But that's no matter—it is cuſtom's blame:—
That we can judge ſo little by a name:—
For inſtance—thoſe who kindly may intend,
To ridicule in us the name of friend,
Are pleas'd to ſtyle us *Quakers*—'tis a name
We Britons born, do utterly diſclaim:
No *tremblers* we, be that the lot of thoſe
Who are to us and ſocial order foes:
Theſe (I ſpeak plainly to prevent miſtake,)
Who were by dear friend Nelſon forc'd to *quake*,
Yea, thoſe invading, vaunting, threat'ning men.
Who have *quaked*, do quake, and ſhall quake again.
The man ſtyled Emperor, has made his boaſt,
That he will eat the beef which we do roaſt.
The man call'd John declares that if he comes,
He ſhall have pudding too, with iron plumbs;
For John hath got ſome men of war on ſhore,
Call'd ſoldiers, who have beat him before,
In Egypt and would beat him here once more.
And John poſſeſſes too a choſen band
Of youths call'd volunteers, who hand in hand
Would elbow forth the ſpoilers of the land.

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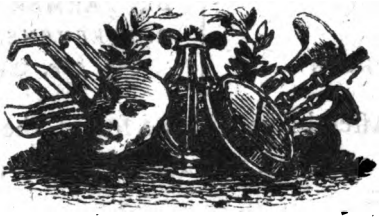
EPILOGUE.

Thus having made ſo *many friends* appear,
We truſt there'll be no lack of kind friends here;
Conſider our petition is not common,
'Tis for that dear, bewitching thing, call'd woman:
Woman, our very beſt of friends you'll own,
Woman, whoſe hope to night is *you* alone,
Who bids me yield to whatſoe'er you ſay,
Except "hats off," and that I can't obey.
Or if my beaver muſt be mov'd—why then
Let me to-morrow put it on again.



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